









*Tommaso Attone .*

Photo. by Vuilleminot Montabone, Rome



ITALY'S FOREIGN AND COLONIAL  
POLICY



# ITALY'S FOREIGN AND COLONIAL POLICY

*A SELECTION FROM THE SPEECHES DELIVERED  
IN THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT*

BY

THE ITALIAN FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER

**SENATOR TOMMASO TITTONI**

DURING HIS SIX YEARS OF OFFICE (1903-1909)

ONLY AUTHORIZED ENGLISH TRANSLATION

BY

**BARON BERNARDO QUARANTA DI SAN SEVERINO**

GRADUATE OF THE NAPLES UNIVERSITY AND OF THE ROYAL  
ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF ITALY

DEDICATED BY PERMISSION

TO

**THE RIGHT HONOURABLE ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR**  
M.P., P.C., F.R.S., D.L.

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*BARON BERNARDO QUARANTA di SAN SEVERINO*

IN presenting this volume to English readers, BARON BERNARDO QUARANTA di SAN SEVERINO adds to his many literary and political services rendered to his own country, while at the same time he places English students of international politics under a very considerable debt of gratitude. He gives us, indeed, what may be described as a unique book of reference on *Italian Foreign and Colonial Policy*, and it will, perhaps, be a matter of surprise to many of his English readers to learn from his pages how many points of contact exist between British and Italian political interests and spheres of diplomatic action.

BARON di SAN SEVERINO is here the mouthpiece of one of the ablest of Italian Ministers for Foreign Affairs, SENATOR TOMMASO TITTONI, recently Ambassador to the Court of St. James', a personal friend of King Edward VII., and actually Ambassador to France,—the Statesman who, with consummate tact, prepared the ground for the foundation of Italy's North-African Empire, and the distinctive feature of whose political programme has ever been, to quote his own words, "*Fidelity to the Triple Alliance, Friendship for France, Friendship for England.*"

This collection of SENATOR TOMMASO TITTONI's political discourses, translated into English by BARON di SAN SEVERINO, forms a volume which should constitute another link in the chain of Anglo-Italian friendship, and, therefore, a strengthening of the bonds making for European peace.

RICHARD BAGOT.



TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR

M.P., P.C., F.R.S., D.L.

BERNARDO QUARANTA DI SAN SEVERINO

DEDICATES

THIS ENGLISH VERSION

OF

“SEI ANNI DI POLITICA ESTERA ”

BY

SENATOR TOMMASO TITTONI





VILLA SAN SEVERINO,  
PORTICI (NAPLES),  
June 6th, 1913.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR, M.P., P.C.  
4, Carlton Gardens,  
London, S.W.

DEAR MR. BALFOUR,

Your kind letter of May 30th, for which I thank you, has just reached me and I am writing to know if you will allow me to dedicate this English edition of Senator Tommaso Tittoni's book "*Sei Anni di Politica Estera*," as a sincere homage, to you, the statesman who has for so many years guided the destinies of one of the most important nations of the world and has, therefore, been a very important factor in European politics.

I have been led to translate this book by the desire of being able to convey its message to Anglo-Saxon readers, in the hope that, through the perusal of these pages coming from one of our leading political men, a statesman of the greatest integrity, wisdom and ability, they may become acquainted with the true spirit which animates Italian foreign policy, as handled by Signor Tittoni.

Before having the honour of dedicating this book to you, I wish by this letter to ask your kind permission to do so, for which I shall be very grateful.

Please accept the expression of my highest regard and believe me,

Truly yours,

BERNARDO QUARANTA DI SAN SEVERINO.



4, CARLTON GARDENS,  
PALL MALL, S.W.  
*June 9th, 1913.*

DEAR BARON di SAN SEVERINO,

I shall be much honoured by the proposed  
dedication of your forthcoming book. I wish it every  
success.

Yours sincerely,

ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR.

To

BARON BERNARDO QUARANTA di SAN SEVERINO,  
Villa San Severino,  
Portici (Naples).



155, VIA RASELLA, ROME,

*December 2nd, 1913.*

To

BARON BERNARDO QUARANTA DI SAN SEVERINO,  
Portici (Naples).

MY DEAR BARON di SAN SEVERINO,

I have read with great attention and interest your excellent translation of the speeches delivered by me in Parliament while Minister for Foreign Affairs and am writing this letter to express to you my utmost satisfaction of your invaluable work.

The fact that you have added to the book a comprehensive and detailed general index and a special index at the beginning of each of the speeches you have chosen and translated for Anglo-Saxon readers cannot fail to give great value to this publication and I want to express to you, my dear Baron, my warmest appreciation of your achievement.

Pray accept my very sincere thanks and believe me,

Very truly yours,

TOMMASO TITTONI.



PREFACE

TO THE ITALIAN EDITION OF 1912

BY SENATOR MAGGIORINO FERRARIS

CHIEF EDITOR OF "*La Nuova Antologia*"

MINISTER FOR POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS FROM 1893 TO 1896.

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IN recent times foreign affairs have been taking an always more important part in the national life of Italy, and the events which have accompanied so far the Tripoli Expedition have contributed to place them in even greater prominence.

During the eventful period of our national deliverance, the foreign policy of the small State of Piedmont, and, later, of the young Kingdom of Italy received at the hands of Victor Emmanuel II. and Camillo Cavour, but one direction: *The unity and independence of the Fatherland.*

After the death of that great Minister and the taking of Rome, the very serious internal problems, such as the administrative organization of the Kingdom, and, most of all, the care of its finances and of public economy imposed themselves as uppermost to our country and the State. Foreign politics remained chiefly the intellectual patrimony of a few enlightened and cultivated minds and of a narrow circle of men, illustrious for their talents and for the services rendered to our country. Marco Minghetti, Emilio Visconti Venosta, Stefano Jacini, Ruggiero Bonghi, and Costantino Nigra—not to mention others—left an ineffaceable impression in the diplomatic life of Italy as

men of action, thinkers and writers. But, except in some periods of great historical moment, in which public opinion took a vivid interest, moved more by the impulsive sentiments which are an Italian popular characteristic than by a clear vision of national interests, foreign politics continued to be in Italy object of study and almost privilege of the few. Men and statesmen worthy of note in the fields of jurisprudence and internal Parliamentary politics appeared often to take no interest in foreign affairs.

The "*Treaty of Berlin*" of 1878 and the occupation of Tunis and of Bosnia-Herzegovina profoundly shook and rudely awakened the national sentiment. Foreign politics seemed to emerge from the secret elaborations of Cabinets and Diplomacy to become suddenly a living problem for a sensitive and easily moved public opinion. We can trace back to this period the beginning of the political action of Sidney Sonnino who, together with Quintino Sella, Francesco Crispi and a whole legion of high-minded men, co-operated to the preparation of that political atmosphere in which the alliance with Germany and Austria, stipulated by F. S. Mancini, became possible.

But the Triple Alliance owes to Francesco Crispi especially its affirmation. A Minister of unbending steadiness of purpose both as a statesman and a patriot, he foresaw with wonderful intuition that the force of the Triple Alliance would have assured Europe of that peace, under the influence of which the young Kingdom of Italy would have had a chance to consolidate its administration, finances, and internal affairs and prepare itself for that colonial expansion towards which all civilized nations were bent. But the foreign policy of Francesco Crispi, rather than the expression of a profound current of public opinion, bore the impression of his own remarkable



personality; rather than a forerunner of the new phase of Parliamentary and national foreign politics entered upon by other modern nations, he was a follower of Palmerston and Disraeli, whom he recalls to our minds.

The important events which took place in Europe and in the Mediterranean following upon the "*Treaty of Berlin*," and the rapid growth of colonial problems began, however, to awaken even in the Italian middle classes the interest and understanding of foreign affairs. To this stage of transition is connected the work of the Marquis Antonio di Rudinì, thanks to whom our first understanding with Russia and the *rapprochement* with France are outlined, powerfully assisted as he was by Delcassé and Barrère as well as by Luzzatti and Tornielli. And in spite of the recent passing incidents this work will remain, because it answers one of those indestructible sentiments that have their foundation in the origin, civilization, and history of the two countries.

One of the most profound sayings of Prince von Bülow was that the new democratic forces of modern society exercise to-day a constantly growing influence on foreign politics, which are going through a great historical evolution. The epoch of conspiracies, of secret compacts between Princes, Statesmen and Governments becomes every day more remote from the field of foreign politics, the aim of which to-day is to faithfully represent the strong currents of sentiment and of interest, which determine the public spirit of a country.

We have seen it at the present moment with regard to the Tripoli Expedition and in the expression of the national thought and will to which it gave occasion. Never did a country have a more clear and distinct vision of its object, and was able to express it by so unanimous and resolute a manifestation of its will. Thus

foreign politics becomes an essential factor of popular and Parliamentary life. It may safely be asserted that the more a people are mature in the modern forms of the representative *régime* of government upon a broad basis, the more will they associate the problems and direction of foreign affairs to those bearing upon internal matters. This is the case in England even more than elsewhere.

It is precisely to this new period, both Parliamentary and national, of the foreign policy of Italy, that belong the personality and the achievements of *Tommaso Tittoni*. His speeches, which have now been gathered for publication, are its clearest demonstration.

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I still bear vividly in mind the recollection of that noteworthy sitting of the Chamber of Deputies of December 15th, 1903, in which the Hon. Tittoni spoke for the first time from the Government benches as Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Giolitti Cabinet. Noteworthy indeed was that sitting, because the whole Chamber felt, with that fine intuition which characterizes it, that it had finally found its Foreign Minister. And when in a great public service the Chamber finds its man, it ends by giving him its regard and affection, not only because of the feeling of good fellowship which is at the bottom of the relations among colleagues, but also because Parliament almost instinctively feels that only the men who are in their right place are capable of giving a safe and sound direction to public affairs.

That the Hon. Tittoni was in his right place at the *Consulta* is shown by the fact that since 1903—except for brief intervals—he has almost continuously directed, supported by the confidence and sympathy of Parliament, the foreign policy of Italy and has remained, with regard to foreign affairs, the principal figure in our militant

political life. Moreover, in these very days he has had the great satisfaction of seeing one of the leading principles of his political programme, the alliance and friendship with Austria, crowned by complete success. And it is success that makes the reputation of statesmen.

Those who know the Hon. Tittoni intimately assert that he experiences a certain feeling of perturbation every time that he is called upon to address Parliament. This has been the case with more than one experienced statesman, and we have the example of the great Macaulay, who could never overcome a feeling of nervousness when before the House of Commons. But in the Hon. Tittoni's case it is simply a passing sensation ; he at once recovers and has a singular mastery of speech.

Certainly, at that memorable Parliamentary sitting of December 15th, 1903, the Hon. Tittoni's perturbation when he arose to speak was visible, and he must have been the first to realize its cause. No doubt a great many of the Members remembered with friendliness and good-will this studious, active, and modest colleague, who for several years had sat among us. But no one expected to see him pass ex-abrupto from the difficult Prefecture of Naples to the much more arduous post of Italian Foreign Affairs Minister, one of the most difficult offices in our Parliamentary world. He had, moreover, chosen for his subject a question at that time more than ever perilous for a new steersman ; the question of the relations between Italy and Austria-Hungary, which at that period were much less satisfactory than at present, and had been, moreover, embittered by the Innsbruck disorders. I feel it is right to say—since I am writing to expose the truth and my own firm conviction, rather than to perform an act of friendship—that the first personal declarations of the Hon. Tittoni aroused in the

Assembly a variety of impressions and comments. But as soon as he entered upon his subject, discussing the conditions of the Balkan Peninsula and above all our relations with Austria-Hungary, the Chamber saw at once in the declarations of the new Minister what was to be the strong and constructive policy which was in effect followed by him during his long permanency at the *Consulta*. The Hon. Giolitti had chosen safely and happily.

What this policy has been, with what continuity, tenacity, and loyalty the Hon. Tittoni has followed it among difficulties, bitterness, and strife, the readers of these pages will gather from the speeches which, put together, and brought out in book form, appear for the first time in this volume that has the one essential merit of being a kind of practical manual of Italian foreign politics, not only because in it are discussed the problems which are of interest for Italy in this field, but because it contains such a harvest of information, of facts and of opinions as is indispensable to follow the trend of the present political events.

Before recalling a few of the fundamental points upon which these speeches touch, it seems useful for me to allude to the two volumes of a similar character which appeared not long ago ; to the collection of the speeches on foreign affairs made by Prince von Bülow, and to that of the Hon. Barzilai, and this without any intention of drawing comparisons which would be out of place, as we have before us three different personalities, three distinct types of Parliamentary speakers.

In Prince von Bülow's speeches what emerges is classical and historical culture. His word is so serene and mild that it could only find a parallel in the oratory of Balfour in England. Often he handles humour with great ability and happy adroitness, but it is so delicate

and witty that it amuses, but does not offend. Some of his famous witticisms will remain famous, because they seem to fix and synthetize a whole situation. But from time to time he feels the pride of speaking from one of the greatest Parliamentary tribunes of the world, and in the name of a great and strong people ; it seems then as if the spirit of Bismarck were transfused into him, and from the wonderful knowledge of the culture and history of the German people he rises to the most sublime heights of patriotism, which irradiate with vivid and resplendent light the greatness of the German nation in the field of world politics, the "*Weltpolitik*."

Witticism gives way to stringent and vigorous dialectics and cutting irony in the splendid eloquence of the Hon. Barzilai, the most tenacious critic and most indefatigable contradicter of all Foreign Affairs Ministers and of the Hon. Tittoni especially, so much so that the two volumes seem to complete each other. They are the work of two strong intellects worthy of measuring themselves against each other in the Parliamentary arena. To the Hon. Barzilai pertains in this duel the easier and more brilliant part of the accuser, to the service of which he brings all the resources and all the effects of forensic oratory admirably handled and highly understood. And to him, as to his other opponents, the Hon. Tittoni answers with the plain, firm, and courageous word of duty, not disjoined at times from a vigorous, often pungent counter-attack, upheld by the conscience of a man who feels his responsibilities and will not fail to his duty. To a Member of Parliament who urges him to do something new—"I have not come here to make great and sudden changes," answers resolutely the Hon. Tittoni, "nor to distinguish myself by extravagances and *coups de main*. I am here only to uphold with firmness that policy which I believe

to be in conformity with the interests of the country. I think that a Foreign Minister who should be anxious to create a good impression without measuring the consequences of his actions, or who would go in search of flattery instead of allowing time to justify his work, would be a national peril. This is why I have always endeavoured to be inspired in my actions by the greatest seriousness of purpose and of methods."

This profound feeling of sincerity and responsibility, which is evident in every word and action of the Hon. Tittoni, has been the principal cause of his success. Parliament first and Europe later became finally convinced that Italy had in him—as it had had before in the Marquis Visconti Venosta—a Minister for Foreign Affairs who dissociated himself entirely from the traditions of machiavelism which are erroneously attributed to Italian politics and which have harmed us so much in the eyes of the world at large. Italy had now a Minister for Foreign Affairs who meant what he said, and did what he meant and said.

"Our policy," says the Hon. Tittoni, "is not a policy of equilibrium or dexterity, because it would not be worthy of a great nation, nor could it last long." He believes in the success of Italian politics, provided we conform ourselves to the greatest sincerity and loyalty. "The declarations which I now make in Parliament," he proceeds, speaking of our relations with Germany and France, "are entirely in conformity with those I have made to the Representatives of these two States. No reservation, no hidden meaning, no ambiguity, such are the characteristics of Italian policy." Thus, little by little, the clouds of diffidence and doubt which the Hon. Tittoni upon coming to power had found gathered around the foreign policy of our country were scattered. Italy became

an element of continuity and strength in the relations among Powers, her allies and friends felt reassured, and the new confidence of both gave us authority and influence in foreign lands.

The Hon. Tittoni held firmly to this attitude of correctness and loyalty, even at moments in which he felt he was putting his popularity to a severe test, be it by promoting our friendship with Russia, or by defending staunchly at the most critical moments our alliance and friendship with Austria-Hungary.

“The office of Minister for Foreign Affairs in Italy,” said the Hon. Tittoni, discussing the Budget of his Department before the Chamber on June 23rd, 1909, “is not easy and is often unpleasant. It has been all the more so for me who, for reasons or pretexts extraneous to foreign politics, am often the object of implacable party strife. But, if I have had, as was only natural, moments of bitterness and discouragement, the sentiment of duty has never failed to carry me forward, never has the vision of the interests of my country been dimmed, never has my faith in its destinies wavered.” And the applause of the Chamber greeted these declarations.

In this manner the work of the Hon. Tittoni is connected with the new Parliamentary, national, and almost popular direction of foreign affairs, which not only must not be shrouded in mystery, but must have its foundation in the consent of Parliament and of the country, with the intent of assuring for it confidence and continuity.

“The Hon. Artom has said that among Foreign Affairs Ministers I have been perhaps the one who has more particularly endeavoured to make his declarations explicit. Certainly,” affirms the Hon. Tittoni on the 12th of May, 1905, “I have the conscience of having always expressed myself before Parliament with sincerity and

clearness, because I hold this to be an indispensable condition, not only to deserve the confidence of Parliament, and to satisfy the public opinion of the country, but also to obtain from other States that confidence, without which the work of a Foreign Minister, be it diligent as it may, is fatally condemned to be fruitless. Allow me, therefore, to loudly affirm from this tribune," thus adds the Hon. Tittoni before the Chamber on December 18th, 1906, "that Italy can give full assurance to all that her foreign policy is inspired by the will of the great majority of Parliament and of the country, in which are agreed men of different parties, and in which, I may add, will always necessarily agree those who have the responsibility of government, as foreign policy is not and must not be subject to shocks, deviation, or change."

"But it must also follow the spirit of the times, because it must be borne in mind that in the world an evolution is at present taking place, in consequence of which fresh elements are entering into the politics of States. These new elements are the progress of liberal and humanitarian ideas, a more pronounced sense of responsibility on the part of those who govern, which spurs them to make every effort to remove the occasions of war, and the impossibility for any modern State, governed by principles of liberty, to engage in a war if it is not willed and sanctioned by a wide and healthy current of public opinion." It is besides impossible to forget that "the economic element is the one which tends always more to acquire the greatest importance in international relations."

It is thus in the thought and purpose of the Hon. Tittoni. Italian foreign politics must not and cannot be merely the expression of the will of a majority, even less of a single man ; it is the consequence of an historical



situation, which the national conscience must understand in order that it become the general patrimony of the nation itself, and be placed far above the changes of men, and the vicissitudes of internal politics.

“The principal quality of any foreign policy,” clearly declared the Hon. Tittoni when presenting himself to the Chamber, “must be its continuity. It is Parliament which must trace for the Government the directing lines of its foreign policy, but it is of the highest importance that, once these lines have been traced, they should remain unaltered, and that at every rustling of leaves they should not again be brought into discussion, and their expediency put in doubt. Any foreign policy that did not have this character of continuity and stability would be condemned to perpetual unfruitfulness.”

Towards this practical and tangible result the Hon. Tittoni, following upon the path of his great forerunner and Master, Emilio Visconti Venosta, has laboured with firmness of purpose, with continuity in word and in deed, persisting in it with faith even in the most difficult moments. And it stands to his credit to have brought to the Government this modern and truly liberal conception of Italian foreign politics, which made it a part of the directing ideas, and of the vivid thought of the people.

Thus it happened that in 1909 the Hon. Tittoni was able to leave the *Consulta* with the same directive principles and purpose with which he had entered it in 1903, and had during the intervening six years occupied this position, ably assisted by the Hon. Fusinato, of whom we all appreciate the talents and culture, and, later, by the now deceased and deeply regretted Hon. Pompili. In this period of time a great step was made, inasmuch as every one feels that to-day Italian foreign policy is not subject to variation on account of a change of men, as is proved

by the fact that both the Hon. Count Guicciardini and the Hon. Marquis di San Giuliano have walked in the same paths. This continuity of purpose in international relations also owes much to the fact that the Hon. Tittoni exercised his office essentially under the Presidency of the Council of the Hon. Giolitti, who has always firmly intended the fundamental principles of Italian foreign policy to be unchanging. And the Hon. Giolitti was ever unsparing of support and confidence to his colleague for Foreign Affairs, with whom, even in the most difficult moments, he showed himself in full and complete solidarity.

It is, besides, a fortunate fact that Italian foreign policy has the firmest foundations of continuity and loyalty in the Crown itself, it being known to all that, within the most correct constitutional limits, it is the object of assiduous care on the part of our learned and enlightened Sovereign.

To prevent any harmful interruption of continuity in foreign politics is a problem of much greater difficulty in Italy than elsewhere. Foreign affairs demand in a people a high sense of individual abnegation and discipline of thought and of spirit, which are the qualities most wanting in southern countries, where the people are impulsive and sentimentalists. This is precisely what often embitters the life of a Foreign Affairs Minister in Italy, and makes his task most arduous. Our people keenly resent even the mere suggestion of a possible offence to the interests of their country, while they give way and easily let themselves be influenced collectively by their generous and warmhearted nature. It is this constant conflict between sentiment and interest which often weakens the hand of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and makes his action uncertain, doubtful, and less effective.

We have had an example of this in the Russo-Japanese War. Italy had generously sacrificed her idealistic point of view in the Transvaal conflict, holding fast to the English nation and giving her, in the hour of her peril and misfortune, fresh proof of the traditional sympathies which our people feel for the British. When the war between Russia and Japan broke out, on the contrary, sentiment conquered and went over entirely to the Japanese nation, of which we all admire the valour and wonderful progress. But our interests were and are with Russia, as is shown by the actual events in Tripoli. In such circumstances, a Minister for Foreign Affairs who has a clear sense of his duties and of his responsibilities with regard to the defence of the national interests, must know how to resist the popular currents, which at times seem to carry everything before them in their impetuosity. Such was the noble attitude of the Hon. Tittoni, not only by his firm and forcible declarations of February 22nd, 1904, and June 23rd, 1909, before the Chamber of Deputies, but also by furthering and cultivating those friendly relations with Russia of which we all at the present moment feel the benefits. The meeting at Racconigi between Czar Nicholas and King Victor Emmanuel III. and the consequences deriving from it are, in fact, a happy page in the history of Italian foreign policy.

Still more difficult becomes the task of the Foreign Affairs Minister in Italy when popular sentiment brings into international relations with other States the principles and criterions of internal politics, without always taking into account the historical differences and distinct mental attitude of the various people.

Nor, lastly, can it be forgotten that our country still lives in a great measure of the glorious traditions of its

past, which spur it to aspire to a high place in international relations. At present the times are changed and new powerful States have arisen in Europe and tend to go beyond the limits of the old world. The military forces on sea and on land of the various nations assume every day more gigantic and painful proportions and require enormous sums that only rich countries can afford to give. Hence the absolute necessity for Italy to co-ordinate her foreign policy to her economic and financial conditions, proportionately to those of the other Great Powers. Well now, in moments of great international problems, public opinion does not always preserve this just measure of proportions, which on the other hand imposes itself to the Foreign Affairs Minister of any State who means to represent his country with authority and credit.

It is for these reasons that often a kind of moral uneasiness, almost a contrast, is noticed in Italy between popular sentiment and the direction of Foreign Affairs. This will explain our assertion that few political offices are as arduous in Italy as that of Foreign Affairs Minister, and that few men find themselves at times in so difficult a position. Thus the long permanency of the Hon. Tittoni at the *Consulta*, the full confidence of Parliament and Country which he never lost, and the very general conviction that he left the Ministry by his own choice, are so many facts that demonstrate the success of the man and of his work, within the limits in which success is consented to a Foreign Affairs Minister of Italy in the present stage of international politics. Even in the most difficult period of his career, at the time of the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austria, the confidence of Parliament was not withdrawn from him, and all now recognize that no other attitude would have been possible, nor was

any other adopted by any of the other Powers. Neither have these incidents prevented the present happy *rapprochement* between Italy and Austria-Hungary.

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Glancing through this volume of speeches of the Hon. Tittoni, one may say that four subjects are given marked prominence: two of them in relation almost to domestic affairs, and two pertaining more particularly to the field of international politics.

The first two concern more especially the problem of emigration and the organization of Italian Somaliland: the other two are devoted instead to the conditions of the Balkan Peninsula and to our relations with Austria-Hungary. I do not hesitate to declare that in the general lines on which these four problems have been treated I entirely agree with the ideas and plan of action adopted by the Hon. Tittoni, and this is the spiritual bond between us. For instance, I entirely concur in his opinion that emigration in Italy presents itself under two absolutely different aspects: that which regards flourishing provinces with superabundant population, and that which manifests itself in poor districts with a scarcity of population and of workers. For these latter regions it seems to me that the first duty of the State would be that of bettering as much as possible the local economic conditions, so as to keep for us these populations for which emigration is not a sign of prosperity, but of misery and impoverishment. On this theme the Hon. Tittoni speaks several times with practical good sense, vivified by a high spirit of patriotism, so much so that he would wish that on the subject of the protection of our emigrants all political and religious differences should be placed in the background. "This is so vast a field for charitable

and humanitarian work," he exclaims, "that there is room for the socialist, for the priest, for all men of good will. . . . And the duty of the Foreign Affairs Minister is to intervene wherever Italian interests are at stake, wherever there is a countryman of ours who, be he a believer or a free-thinker, a conservative or a revolutionary, betakes himself to distant regions with our sweet native tongue on his lips and the image of the Fatherland in his heart."

This practical sense of realities that is indispensable for the conduct of affairs of State, joined to a vivid patriotic spirit, have inspired the Hon. Tittoni's whole line of conduct with reference to colonial matters, and more particularly in the organization of Somaliland, which was one of the subjects to which he devoted the greatest attention both at the *Consulta* and in Parliament, where he had the active co-operation of the Hon. de Marinis, diligent and studious Reporter on the Budget for Foreign Affairs and on several other important Parliamentary Bills.

While the Civil Government and the administrative and economic progress of Eritrea, thanks to the sagacious and able work of the Hon. Ferdinando Martini, were being consolidated, the Hon. Tittoni was the first Minister who interested himself seriously of Somaliland, taking that region from the state of neglect in which it had been left. To him was devolved the task of redeeming the ports of the Benadir from the Sultan of Zanzibar, of dissolving the *Chartered Company*, of placing Somaliland under the direct administration of the State, of pushing our occupation as far as the Webi-Shebeli, of initiating the agricultural concessions, of drawing the border line with Abyssinia, securing for Italy not only Lugh, but also the territory north of it up to Dolo, to which place converge the caravan routes of the interior.

His speech of February 13th, 1908, to the Chamber of Deputies is a complete, positive and constructive colonial programme, which would almost seem made for our present action in Tripoli. "To administer the colony of the Benadir," so he expresses himself, "with the intent of giving it value from the agricultural and commercial point of view, and to have sufficient strength to carry out this programme, it is necessary that the King's Government should affirm itself materially and morally upon the populations that surround the stations of the Benadir. To obtain this end we must strongly organize ourselves on the coast, and then proceed gradually to a pacific penetration towards the interior, extending our direct administration along the Webi-Shebeli river." This programme of colonial policy, which has since been continued by the Marquis di San Giuliano in Somaliland, has been lately crowned by the successful occupation of Shidle, opportunely effected by Governor de Martino. This same programme will be applied later to Tripolitania and Cyrenaica.

But the two great problems that constantly agitated foreign affairs, during the period in which the Hon. Tittoni was at the head of this Department, were the conditions of Turkey and Italy's relations with Austria-Hungary. For many years our country has lived under the preoccupation—which still subsists—that changes harmful to Italy should take place in the Balkan Peninsula, especially with regard to the Adriatic. The Hon. Tittoni's action aimed constantly at avoiding events which would have had a profound and painful repercussion in Italy. This action was developed along three distinct lines: to maintain the European Concert; to promote and foster as much as possible the movement of internal reform in Turkey; to inspire the interested Powers and especially

Austria-Hungary with the firm conviction of the loyalty of Italian policy in wanting to maintain the *status quo* in the Balkan Peninsula. And, except for the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which consecrated an ancient and irrevocable *de facto* occupation, the loyal and reciprocal respect for the agreements existing between Italy and Austria-Hungary and our good relations with Russia served to avoid new and serious complications in the Balkan Peninsula, in spite of the slowness and incapacity of the Porte in applying the reforms repeatedly urged by the Powers and especially by Italy.

As a matter of fact, the Hon. Tittoni expressed so clearly before the Chamber of Deputies on May 13th, 1904, Italy's and Austria-Hungary's point of view in the Balkan question that it will be useful to here reproduce his declarations.

“ Our action in the East is disinterested, because it is well it should be known that nothing is further from our intentions than any thought of occupation or of division of the spoils, and it is equally far from the intentions of Austria. Our policy aims before anything else to support the administrative reforms and to preserve the political *status quo*.

“ But if by any chance, which we hope may be very distant, the preservation of the *status quo* should no longer be possible, we should be opposed to any occupation or division between some Powers, and would want instead that they should all agree on the principle of autonomy on the basis of nationality.

“ As to Austria, she has repeatedly declared she does not in the least contemplate an occupation which, in so far as regards Macedonia, would be contrary to the spirit and to the letter of our alliance, if made independently from us, and, in so far as concerns Albania, would be



in opposition to the special agreement of mutual disinterestedness that Austria has with Italy.

“Albania has no great importance in itself, but its littoral and its ports are all-important, as they would assure to Austria or Italy, if either of the two Powers possessed them, the uncontested military supremacy on the Adriatic. Now, neither can Italy allow Austria such a supremacy, nor could Austria to Italy, and if ever one of them should claim it, the other would have to use every means to oppose it. This is the logic of the situation, and this is why the two States, preferring and sincerely desiring to maintain the alliance, have both renounced to any eventual occupation of Albania, in case of the perturbation of the *status quo*. As Count Goluchowski well expressed it to me, if Austria and Italy wish for friendship and peace, Albania must be for each of them a ‘*Noli me tangere*.’ This once established, the Balkans have neither sudden occupations to fear, nor surprises, and if, as in the past, alarming news should continue to be spread, public opinion should receive them with the greatest incredulity.”

But it is above all in the delicate problem of our relations with Austria-Hungary that it undoubtedly stands to the Hon. Tittoni's credit to have created, as he well said, “a clear and precise mutual understanding, free from restrictions, reservations and hidden meanings,” standing firm in his duty of inspiring that calm and confidence which “is so difficult to obtain.” And this line of action had its clear expression in the declaration by which the Hon. Tittoni established from the very beginning the unchangeable direction of his policy.

“Our relations with Austria,” so he expressed himself on December 15th, 1903, “have, as they always have had,

a great importance for our country. On these relations no uncertainty can be entertained.

“ We believe that the alliance with Austria should be maintained, and that our friendship with this nation should remain whole-hearted and sincere. If anything different were desired, it would be advisable to say so very explicitly, in order that other men might come to these benches to take at once and without delay those steps which would be necessary to face the grave consequences which a different policy would entail. A middle-way policy in these cases is the worst that can be chosen, a policy of polemics, of recriminations, of small and ever-freshly arising conflicts, a policy of amateur *irredentism*, be it University or Parliamentary, I believe to be the worst, the most fraught with danger, the most disastrous for our country.”

And further on :—

“ These, therefore, remain the foundations of the Government’s policy : *To firmly uphold the Triple Alliance, to uphold and consolidate our sincere friendship with England and France.*

“ This programme we intend to carry out with continuity and firmness, without taking into account clamour or agitation, without seeking for easily won applause or momentary and passing popularity ; but on the one condition that we be supported and upheld by the confidence of Parliament.”

These are the precise and clear lines of conduct traced for himself, Parliament, and the country by the Hon. Tittoni, upon assuming the office of Foreign Affairs Minister, and which he followed with tenacity and continuity of purpose in his long permanency at the *Consulta*. And I, who have always considered the cordial and loyal understanding with Austria as one of the fundamental

points of Italian politics, have been able to note with pleasure the success obtained by the Hon. Tittoni along this line, even in the midst of grave difficulties and painful incidents. But it is above all in the present phase of Italian policy in Tripolitania that the full value of the friendship between Italy and Austria-Hungary for the future of the Balkan Peninsula, for the peace of Europe, and for the economic and social progress of the two people has been revealed.

When the echo of the friendly demonstrations made by the people of Rome before the Austrian Embassy in occasion of the dastardly attempt upon His Majesty King Victor Emmanuel III. reached Austria, an important paper of Vienna evoked the memory of Count von Aehrenthal, who died before he could see realized the aspiration for which he had worked with so much faith.

More fortunate than he, the Hon. Tittoni has been able to see the fruits of an able and loyal foreign policy. The friendship between Italy and Austria-Hungary, entrusted to the wisdom of the two Governments and people, gives the Triple Alliance a character of geniality and stability which makes its influence decisive upon the destinies of Europe. Because it would be superfluous to add that the Triple Alliance, also through the efforts of the Hon. Tittoni, became always more the stable and unchanging pivot of Italian foreign policy. On several occasions he affirmed and repeated resolutely that the Government's programme was to "remain unaltered" in its two fundamental points: "*To maintain and consolidate the Triple Alliance, to maintain and consolidate our friendship with England and France.*"

But just as "we see that the great Powers of Europe, while remaining faithful to their alliances, try to find in the friendship with other Powers fresh and greater

guarantees of peace . . . in the same manner Italy, while remaining faithful to the Triple Alliance, has made ever more close and friendly her relations with England and France. Of this every one should be glad, because what is furthered by it is the cause of peace and civilization."

Thus, as the Hon. Tittoni says, while on the one side "we give great value to our friendship with England which is traditional," on the other hand, "there is no incompatibility between the alliance with Germany and the friendship with France, because the Triple Alliance is eminently peaceful and has not the character of an offence to whomsoever, but only of defence against those who should wish to break the peace."

And, as it has been seen that the understanding with Austria-Hungary reassures Italy concerning the Balkan Peninsula and the Adriatic, in the same manner "there is perfect agreement between Italy, France, and England regarding the Mediterranean and its approaches." The Hon. Tittoni in this problem has only had to refer to the declarations made by his predecessors, which reassured Parliament and the Country, even *apropos* of the *Anglo-French Agreement* concerning Morocco and of the "*Understanding between Italy and the other Powers, concerning the future of Tripoli under determined contingencies. . .*"

Almost prophetic words these, that, pronounced on March 13th, 1904, were to be brought into effect only in 1911-12, thanks to the agreements entered into by the Hon. Visconti Venosta and Prinetti. Moreover, the problem of Tripolitania is clearly outlined in the declarations made to the Senate on May 10th, 1905, in answer to the interpellations of Senator Vigoni and Senator De Martino, which gave the Hon. Tittoni occasion to affirm that "all the interested Powers had recognized Italy's

prior claim on Tripoli, as before those of any other Power, and that this priority was assured in the most explicit and efficient manner." Still, according to the Hon. Tittoni, "Italy will not occupy Tripoli unless circumstances shall arise that will make it absolutely indispensable. In Tripolitania Italy finds the element that determines the balance of influence in the Mediterranean, and we could never allow this balance to be altered to our damage." It is thus that, while on May 12th, 1905, the Chamber of Deputies recognizes that the solution of the economic problem of Tripolitania must be preceded by serious study, it also remarks that the economic penetration is subsidiary to the political interest, and that the latter, as every one recognizes, is for us of very first importance.

Thus, with rapid touches, are outlined in this book and enlightened, through the reciprocal relations between Italy and her allies and friends, the fundamental principles of our foreign policy in the international situation which has been developing and forming itself in the last few years. It has been often deplored also in Parliament that in Italy there does not exist a public opinion concerning foreign affairs. A book like this is, without any doubt, a precious contribution towards this high end, because it shows how complex and arduous are international relations, how in such matters it is necessary to blend in a just measure sentiment and interest, and above all the great responsibility inherent in such international questions.

Together with the unceasing and promising awakening of Italian culture and of a national conscience, the interest for foreign affairs is also coming to life. May these pages, which are the reflection of events that have been lived through and enacted, speak with a high sentiment of

patriotism to the new generations that are preparing themselves for public life of the problems connected with the reciprocal relations of modern States and people. May they concur to the formation of an opinion, of a thought, of a national conscience, which, with the conviction of its responsibilities, may assure always greater clearness, loyalty, and continuity to Italian foreign policy.

MAGGIORINO FERRARIS.

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PART FIRST  
ITALY'S FOREIGN POLICY



# ITALY'S FOREIGN AND COLONIAL POLICY

## PART FIRST

### ITALY'S FOREIGN POLICY

#### I. SITTING OF DECEMBER 15TH, 1903—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

Relations with Austria and the Innsbruck riots.

HONOURABLE Members : In taking for the first time my place upon these benches I hope to find you inspired towards me by that good will of which you have given me so many proofs when I had the honour of sitting in this Chamber. Of such good will I stand greatly in need. My appointment to this delicate and high office has been greeted by a section of the Italian Press with undisguised distrust, a feeling which has been expressed also in this Chamber, although in terms of greatest courtesy, by my personal friends the Hon. Barzilai and De Viti de Marco.

It would be out of place for me to pass judgment on myself, all the more as I think you are preparing to judge not me, but my achievements in this office ; still, you will allow me to recall here a curious historical coincidence which I have happened to read in a very interesting book of Chialo on Giacomo Dina and his work.

#### 4 ITALY'S FOREIGN AND COLONIAL POLICY

In 1863, when Emilio Visconti Venosta, then a new man, was called for the first time by Marco Minghetti to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Giacomo Dina wrote in the "*Opinione*" an article inspired by hostile feelings against him, from which I will read a passage, because it seems to me that what has been published in several papers with regard to myself is almost the repetition of what Dina wrote in connection with the appointment of the Hon. Visconti Venosta. Here are the lines written by Dina :

"Being accustomed to tell the truth frankly to all, we feel it to be a sacred duty to use equal frankness with our friends. The appointment of Visconti Venosta to the post of Minister for Foreign Affairs has produced inexpressible surprise in the Chamber of Deputies, in the Senate and outside Parliament as well. It was so unexpected that no one believed it until the official announcement was given out. In the present conditions of the country it was thought that some political man of high Parliamentary or Diplomatic standing would have been appointed to this post ; the portfolio for Foreign Affairs should have been entrusted to some one who, with his *présti*ge and name, could, at least in a measure, counteract the defects which arise from our peculiar contingencies."

I will not presume to compare myself with such an illustrious man as the Hon. Visconti Venosta, but allow me at least to draw from this curious historical coincidence a happy omen for myself.

This much said, I come to the last interpellations, those bearing on the Innsbruck riots, which are most important; because this special question is connected with our whole foreign policy.

The Hon. Fradeletto has pointed out the dangers of foreign politics, but it seems to me that one of the greatest

of them is misunderstanding, especially if this misunderstanding were to exist between Government and Parliament. As several speakers who preceded me have well said, the principal quality of any foreign policy must be its continuity. It is Parliament which must trace for the Government the directing lines of its foreign policy, but it is of the highest importance that, once these lines have been traced, they should remain unaltered and that at every rustling of leaves they should not be again brought into discussion and their expediency put in doubt. Any foreign policy that did not have this character of continuity would be condemned to perpetual sterility.

I will not go into the recital of the events at Innsbruck. Evidently I must place myself on a somewhat different ground from that of the preceding speakers, that is to say on the ground of international rights and obligations. Now the Austrian Government in forbidding (for reasons of public order and in virtue of articles 2 and 6 of the Austrian law on public gatherings) the opening of the free courses of the Innsbruck University, was doing something which cannot fall under the control or judgment of other States. That these reasons of public order *did* exist has been proved by the riots which have taken place at Innsbruck, which have been universally and justly deplored, and which I also highly disapprove and deplore.

That the Austrian Government did not have and has no intention of denying to its Italian subjects an autonomous University has also been recognized, as has been declared in the Austrian Chamber by the Prime Minister, Dr. de Koerber. The Italian Government could not, therefore, according to the most elementary rules which regulate the relations between different States, interfere in a matter which has taken place in a foreign State, among subjects of that State.

## 6 ITALY'S FOREIGN AND COLONIAL POLICY

The only questions which still remained to be examined were the conduct of our Consul, to whom the Hon. Fradeletto has referred, and the position of the Italian subject who was implicated in those events, that is to say of the University Professor who had gone to Innsbruck to inaugurate the courses of the Italian University.

As far as our Consul is concerned, the investigations made have caused it to be ascertained that he did not pronounce those disrespectful words which were attributed to him and which, if uttered by him, coming from the lips of an Italian such as he is, would have amounted to nothing less than a crime against his Fatherland.

As to the Italian Professor (Professor De Gubernatis) who had gone to inaugurate the free courses of the University of Innsbruck, evidently he could not ask for himself greater rights and privileges than those granted to the citizens of that foreign State ; therefore, if the prohibition was valid for Austrian subjects, it was necessarily valid for him as well. Only one duty was strictly incumbent upon the Austrian Government, that is to say to protect him against the manifestations of the German students, and to this duty it has been ascertained that the Austrian Government did not fail, because it appears from the reports that the police did their best to hold back the brutally rioting masses of German students ; it has been equally ascertained that the shots of which it has been spoken were not fired. Therefore, no remonstrances could be made by the Italian Government.

It has been remarked, however, by the Hon. Barzilai among others, in an interrogation which he presented in May last regarding other similar events at Innsbruck, that, if from the strictly legal point of view this argument is just, it is not so from the standpoint of sentiment. And

so be it ; I am willing to admit it. But to what conclusion can this bring us ? Let us examine this question well.

Even without making regular remonstrances to Austria, could we at least have had an exchange of friendly opinions with that country in consideration of our mutual ties of alliance, pointing out to her how such events are harmful to the good relations between the two countries ? It would certainly not have been easy to do so after the manifestations which have taken place in Italy, even though they were limited to a few Universities and the importance of which, to my mind, has been exaggerated. But there is another factor which one must bear in mind, that is to say that the Innsbruck riots are only a consequence of the race problem which is ever present in Austria-Hungary, independently of the Government, and which is cause of no slight embarrassment to the Government itself. What the position of the Austrian Government is with regard to the clashing of nationalities was well expressed by the Austrian Prime Minister Count Badeni when, addressing Parliament, he said :

“ It is not our fault if there is in Austria a question of nationalities. If Austria were differently constituted, she would be easier to govern, but she is what she is. Between the different nationalities we must find an equilibrium, and it is not easy to satisfy one without antagonizing the other, above all, when the demands and aspirations of the one are opposed to those of the others.”

Therefore, the Government itself is so deeply embarrassed on account of this struggle of nationalities, that it is all it can do to keep Parliament going.

Besides, the Austrian Government has so little associated itself with the reprehensible intemperances of the Innsbruck students, that it has manifested sentiments

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directly opposed to them, and the same may be said of the Press ; because, if it is true that there has been one newspaper that has grossly insulted Italy, there have been many other important Austrian papers that represent the German liberal element, which have expressed themselves quite differently and have rendered due homage to Italian culture.

I will quote as an example the words published by one of the leading papers of Vienna : " Who would dare on account of national rivalries or political prejudices to hold in low esteem Italian civilization ? Our interest is awakened when we hear the word Italy, which brings to our memory what the whole world owes to the giants of human thought, who in the Italian Peninsula have had their birth."

It has been said, and in fact this is the most noteworthy part of the Hon. Fradeletto's speech, that it is useful, that it is advisable and necessary to encourage the development of Italian culture and language even beyond the frontiers of Italy, and no one in this Chamber will contest this point, much less will I. This task ought to be undertaken by those who vainly devote themselves to noisy manifestations in the public squares ; let them instead unite in this holy propaganda. Still, we must bear in mind that even the North Germans, who have fostered much more powerfully than we have German language and culture in Bohemia, have done so without the German Government's interfering with the Austrian Government in the fierce struggles between Germans and Czechs, and without weakening the ties of the alliance between Austria and Germany. It will also be well to remember that in spite of the spirited resistance of the Germans of the Baltic provinces against russification, Prince Bismarck was always in friendly relations with



Russia, and no one, I think, will accuse Prince Bismarck of lukewarm patriotism.

It has been said by a man of great authority that Vienna is the pivot of European politics, and that the existence of Austria is necessary to the order of Europe and to international peace. I will not discuss this point. I will say that our relations with Austria have, as they always have had, a great importance for our country. On these relations no uncertainty can be entertained.

We believe that the alliance with Austria should be maintained and that our friendship with this nation should remain wholehearted and sincere. If anything different were desired it would be advisable to say so very explicitly, in order that other men might come to these benches to take at once and without delay those steps which would be necessary to face the grave consequences which a different policy would entail. A middle-way policy in these cases is the very worst that can be chosen, a policy of polemics, of recriminations, of small and ever freshly arising conflicts, a policy of amateur "*irredentism*," be it University or Parliamentary, I believe to be the worst, the most fraught with danger, the most disastrous for our country.

Our country asks for peace and tranquillity in order to devote itself to the development of her economical energies, and we look to the preservation of peace as to the supreme end of our policy; we, therefore, remain faithful to the Triple Alliance, which has shown itself an efficient instrument for peace. It has already been said that, contrary to expectations and to the attacks made upon it, the Triple Alliance has not merely failed to burden us with exaggerated armaments, but has instead allowed us to pause in our military expenditure and to consolidate the budget of the Ministry of War. And this same Triple

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Alliance has not prevented us, as was feared, from keeping up our traditional friendship with England, nor from coming first to a *rapprochement* with France, then to a cordial understanding and sincere friendship. These events have found their sanction in the enthusiastic welcome recently received in those countries by our beloved Sovereigns, the counterpart of which may be found in the reception given by us to King Edward VII. and the certainly equally enthusiastic one which will be given to President Loubet in his forthcoming visit to Italy.

These, therefore, remain the foundations of the Government's policy: *To firmly uphold the Triple Alliance, to uphold and consolidate our sincere friendship with England and France.*

### II. SITTING OF MAY 14TH, 1904—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

The directing lines of Italy's foreign policy: *Loyalty to the Triple Alliance, cordial friendship with England and France*—Political situation in the Mediterranean and protection of Italian interests in that sea—The Balkan question and the Macedonian Reforms—Albania and Count Goluchowski's "*Noli me tangere*."

After five months the Budget for Foreign Affairs affords the Chamber fresh opportunity for discussing the Government's foreign policy.

In these few months, following upon the visit our Sovereigns paid the King of England, which reaffirmed our traditional and close friendship with the powerful British nation, have taken place the meeting of the King of Italy with the German Emperor, in which both rulers have shown how deeply they have at heart the alliance which happily unites their people; the pleasant trip to

Sicily of the same Emperor, greeted unanimously everywhere as the friend and faithful ally of Italy ; my visit to Count Goluchowski, which gave occasion to the most explicit and gratifying exchange of opinions as to Italy's and Austria-Hungary's policy in the Balkan Peninsula, and, finally, the visit of the President of the French Republic to the King of Italy, during which enthusiastic and unforgettable manifestations have shown how greatly Italy values the friendship of France and what strong feelings of kinsmanship bind her to her great Latin sister.

These events have been erroneously compared by considering the one as opposed to the other, and some people have thought they have noticed discordant notes and imaginary contrasts, concluding that the one was brought about to diminish the value of the other, that the impression and value of the one has been reduced or destroyed by the other.

Now this is absolutely contrary to truth and is nothing but political gossip, which in all countries, while it sometimes succeeds in dimming for the time being the clear vision of events, is always dissipated by the wave of truth and light which, in all free States, is the consequence of an open Parliamentary debate.

The events I have just alluded to not only do not belittle, but complete each other, not only do they not clash, but harmonize with one another, not only do they fail to imply any contradiction, but are the logical and consistent consequence, the actuation of the programme I put before the Chamber last December and which remains unaltered : *To maintain and consolidate the Triple Alliance, to maintain and consolidate our friendship with England and France.*

The Government's programme remains unchanged, and the recent events only confirm it. There have been some

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Members who have expressed the doubt, and the Hon. Barzilai has done so more explicitly than any one else, that this policy of Italy, by which she believes it possible to keep up her alliance with some Powers and her friendship with others, will not be of long duration, and that it will inevitably be the cause of feelings of envy and jealousy, of misunderstandings both with our allies and friends, who will doubt our loyalty and end by leaving us in isolation.

Well, I hold a quite different opinion. First of all Italy, aiming principally to the preservation of peace, cannot adopt a different policy. Then one must also bear in mind that in the world an evolution is at present taking place in consequence of which fresh elements are entering into the politics of States. These new elements are the progress of liberal and humanitarian ideas, a more pronounced sense of responsibility on the part of those who govern, which spurs them to make every effort to remove the occasions of war, and the impossibility for any modern State, governed by principles of liberty, to engage in a war if it is not willed and sanctioned by a wide and healthy current of public opinion. We, therefore, see that the Great Powers of Europe, while remaining faithful to their alliances, try to find in the friendship with other Powers fresh and greater guarantees of peace. Thus Austria has come to an understanding with Russia as regards their Balkan policy ; thus Germany, who recently reaffirmed through her Emperor her loyalty to the Triple Alliance as Italy reaffirmed it through her King, is showing in every way that friendly relations with Russia are one of the essential foundations of her policy ; thus France, closely bound to Russia by her alliance, has come to an understanding with England with regard to all the

questions which were an occasion of misunderstanding and conflict between the two countries; likewise Italy, while remaining faithful to the Triple Alliance, has made always more close and friendly her relations with England and France. Of this every one should be glad, because what is furthered by it is the cause of peace and civilization.

Nor is our policy, as some one has said, a policy of equilibrium or dexterity, because it would not be worthy of a great nation, nor could it last long. It could be called such if there were incompatibility between our alliance with Germany and Austria and our friendship with England and France. In this case we should be pursuing a chimera by trying to reconcile what is irreconcilable, and we should instead have to choose clearly and resolutely between the one or the other.

But this incompatibility does not exist. Our friendship with England is traditional and has never prevented us from taking part in other groupings of Great Powers. As regards Austria, the favourable declarations of Count Goluchowski upon the Anglo-French *entente* are very recent, and there is no incompatibility between our alliance with Germany and our friendship with France, because the Triple Alliance is eminently peaceful and has no character of offence against whomsoever, but only of defence against those who might wish to break the peace. As to France, quite recently the eminent statesman who directs her foreign policy, Minister Delcassé, repeated to me personally the affirmation that French policy is and means to be essentially peaceful and is averse to every idea of provocation or aggression.

As to Germany, the Chancellor, Prince von Bülow, who has always shown affection for Italy, declared before the Reichstag in the beginning of May: "Our relations

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with France are peaceful and friendly; and will remain such as far as depends from me."

I, therefore, believe that we must not change the directing lines of our foreign policy, and I also firmly believe in the success of this policy, but upon one condition, that in our relations with Germany and France we conform ourselves to the greatest sincerity and loyalty. Thus I affirm that the declarations which I now make in Parliament are entirely in conformity with those I have made to the Representatives of these two States. No reservation, no hidden meaning, no ambiguity, such are the characteristics of Italian foreign policy.

Apropos of the "*Anglo-French Agreement concerning Morocco*" and of the known agreements between Italy and the other Powers with regard to the future of Tripoli under given contingencies, some speakers have referred to the political situation in the Mediterranean and to the protection of our interests in this sea. But, in the present discussion, these allusions have been much less pointed and less insistent than usual. This is certainly due to the precise declarations made upon the subject by my predecessors, which have effectively reassured the Chamber and the country. I am glad to be able to fully confirm those declarations. The "*Anglo-French Agreement*," while constituting from the point of view of European politics a fresh and precious guarantee of peace, represents from the more special standpoint of the Mediterranean, as far as Italy is concerned, the last consequence of the pre-existing peaceful understandings, by which it is given us to look serenely towards the future.

I now must discuss the interpellations which regard more particularly our relations with Austria and our policy in the Balkan Peninsula. Already in December I clearly pointed out the policy I meant to follow with

regard to Austria. I can now say that this policy has had full success, as the relations between the two countries are most cordial and are inspired by the greatest confidence; while there is complete similarity of views as to their respective interests in the Balkan Peninsula. I am most pleased by the visit made to Count Goluchowski, because; conversing with greatest frankness on both sides, we found ourselves in perfect agreement and left each other with feelings of reciprocal confidence which cannot fail to have a happy influence upon the relations between the two States.

No great degree of acumen is necessary to perceive that the part assumed by the Hon. Barzilai in his speech is much easier than mine. With subtle art he has tried to arouse the doubts, the suspicions, the diffidence, the passions which human nature is prone to.

*I must inspire calmness of spirit and that confidence which it is so difficult to obtain. Well, although more arduous, I prefer my task, and, not on my own account, but for my country, I regret that to the upholding of his arguments the Hon. Barzilai should bring such great talents and such powerful dialectics. He has recalled with just and natural satisfaction the part he played in removing the misunderstandings between Italy and France by discountenancing the exaggeration of the incidents which could give rise to them and by attenuating the language of an imprudent Press which fanned the flames of discord. A noble and holy mission indeed, Hon. Barzilai, is that of the statesman who devotes himself to extinguishing the ill-advised feelings of enmity which divide two people. But why, then, does he not join me in such a mission also with regard to Italy's relations to Austria-Hungary, instead of sowing fresh seed for strife and resentment?*

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The Hon. Barzilai has said that he does not at present wish for war with Austria, but speeches like his are nothing but a preparation for war, and war is not prepared by exciting popular passions, but by organizing an Army and Navy capable of undertaking it.

The Hon. Barzilai has asked : " What should be done ? " but he has not answered the question under the pretext that it should not be the task of a Member of the Opposition to give advice to the Government. But then why does he lament the fact that in Italy there does not exist a public opinion in matters of foreign politics ? How could such an opinion be formed if, aside from the Government's action, no positive programme is formulated, but only criticisms are offered as easy to make as they are fruitless ?

When I was called to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs I found that public opinion, with regard to the Balkan question, was nervous, diffident, most sensitive. It seemed to many that the Austro-Russian action had eliminated the European Concert and placed Italy entirely aside ; the papers gathered the most extravagant and alarming news of Austrian mobilization for the occupation of Macedonia, of Italian expeditions to Albania, and it seemed as if from the Balkan Peninsula were to come forth the spark that would have kindled the fire of a European war. Now these pessimistic previsions have been dispelled.

The Austro-Russian action has taken place within the field of the carrying out of the reforms contained in the Mürzsteg programme, to which the Civil Agents appointed by the two Governments superintend with general satisfaction ; the melting of the snows has not been marked by a fresh outburst of insurrection, because the Christian populations trust in the action of the Powers ; Turkey and Bulgaria, between whom a conflict seemed almost



inevitable, have come to an understanding ; the European Concert may be said to have been renewed, as the most important questions have been examined by the Powers who signed the "*Treaty of Berlin*" and by whose mandate Russia and Austria are acting ; the organization of the *Gendarmerie* has begun, with the co-operation of all the Powers, and Italy, whose interests have not only been duly considered by her allies, but have also been strongly supported by England and France, who share our views in the Eastern question, Italy, I say, has to-day in the Balkans the position which is due to her, with the command-in-chief of the *Gendarmerie* entrusted as it is to an Italian General, and with the assignment to her officers of the district which we had asked for.

Moreover, our disinterested action in the East is viewed with confidence by Turkey and at the same time with sympathy by the Balkan States.

It is with a purpose that I have said *disinterested*, for it is well that it should be known that nothing is further from our intentions than the thought of occupation or division of the spoils, and it is equally far from the intentions of Austria. Our policy aims first of all to support the Administrative Reforms and to maintain the *status quo*.

But if, by any chance, which we hope may be very distant, the preservation of the *status quo* should no longer be possible, we should be opposed to any occupation or division between some Powers and would want instead that they should all agree on the principle of autonomy on the basis of nationality.

As to Austria, she has repeatedly declared she does not in the least contemplate an occupation, which, in so far as regards Macedonia, would be contrary to the spirit and the letter of the pact of our alliance if made independently from us and, in so far as concerns Albania,

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would be in opposition to the special agreement of mutual disinterestedness that Austria has with Italy.

Albania has no great importance in itself, but its littoral and its ports are all-important, as they would assure to Austria or Italy, if either of the two Powers possessed them, the uncontested military supremacy in the Adriatic. Now, neither can Italy allow Austria such a supremacy, nor could Austria to Italy, and if ever one of them should claim it, the other would have to use every means to oppose it. This is the logic of the situation. Therefore, the two States, preferring and sincerely desiring peace and the maintenance of the alliance, have both renounced to any eventual occupation of Albania in case of the perturbation of the *status quo*. As Count Goluchowski well expressed it to me, if Austria and Italy wish for friendship and peace, Albania must be for each of them a "*Noli me tangere*." This once established, the Balkans have neither sudden occupations to fear nor surprises, and if, as in the past, alarming news should continue to be spread, public opinion should receive them with the greatest incredulity.

Above all, if Austria and Italy continue to perfect their armaments, this fact should in no way cause the impression that their desire for peace is less intense or their relations less cordial.

I have affirmed how necessary a peaceful policy is for Italy and how the maintenance of peace should be uppermost in our thoughts. But it is impossible to carry out any foreign policy whatever without a strong Army and a powerful Navy and unless the frontiers are duly protected. With the supreme object of the greatness of Italy in my mind, I would wish that this should be the conviction not only of the Conservative parties, but also of the Democratic ones, to which, in closing my speech, I

will recall the words pronounced on a solemn occasion by the Head of a great Democracy, the President of the French Republic :

“The will of the country is to have a strong, well-disciplined and well-trained Army. This is the best means of preserving peace and of increasing the sympathies of other nations, who willingly join those who are strong and whom they respect, while they neglect the weak, whose friendship and aid are valueless.”

### III: SITTING OF MAY 10TH, 1905—(SENATE)

The Tripoli question and Italy's relations with Turkey—The Tripolitan border lines and hinterland.

Before the Speaker brings up the discussion of the various interpellations, I think it will be well for me to make a few brief declarations, so as to place the Tripoli question in its true light and to establish the truth clearly and precisely with regard to the rumours which for several days have occupied the Press and agitated public opinion.

I must, first of all, beg the Senate to bear in mind the declarations I have had the opportunity of making before Parliament on the occasion of the discussion of the last Budget for Foreign Affairs. I then said :

“Apropos of the ‘*Anglo-French Agreement concerning Morocco*’ and of the known agreements between Italy and the other Powers with regard to the future of Tripoli under given contingencies, some speakers have referred to the political situation in the Mediterranean and to the protection of our interests in this sea ; but these allusions have been much less pointed and insistent than heretofore. This is certainly due to the precise declarations made upon

the subject by my predecessors, which have effectively reassured the Chamber and the country, and I am glad to be able to fully confirm those declarations."

To-day I can do nothing better than to renew these assurances. If the necessary reserve incumbent upon the Government forbids me from speaking of the single acts by which all the interested Powers have recognized Italy's prior rights on Tripoli as before those of any other nation, nothing prevents my saying that these rights have been assured in the most explicit and efficient manner.

But I have often been asked lately: "In what way does the Italian Government mean to avail itself of these rights? Is it preparing to occupy Tripolitania?"

To this question I answer decidedly: No. To my mind Italy should not occupy Tripoli except when circumstances will make such a course absolutely indispensable. In Tripolitania Italy finds the element which determines the balance of influence in the Mediterranean, and we could never allow this balance to be disturbed to our damage.

We are following with loyalty and conviction a policy of peace, which is what the country demands and what it needs. But, while wishing for peace, while using every means in our power to maintain it, and while believing with absolute faith that the march of events will not break it, we must provide for the protection of our vital interests in the sea which surrounds us and we must have in any case the means that will enable us to protect them. Towards this end are directed the provisions for the Navy that the Italian Government has decided to place before Parliament. This once established, I repeat that the Italian Government must not think of occupying Tripolitania at present. Such an occupation must not be thought of while we are with Turkey in friendly relations, which

have of late become even more cordial ; it must not be thought of at present, because the occupation of a territory belonging to the Ottoman Empire would mean giving an example and an encouragement to those who wish to hasten the end of this Empire, and this would not be admissible when the integrity of the Ottoman Empire is one of the foundations of Italian foreign policy.

But, if we do not wish to occupy Tripoli at present; that does not mean that our action there should be nil. It is evident that the rights we have upon Tripoli for the future must give us, even at present, a preference in the economic field, in directing our capitals to that region and in promoting commercial currents and agrarian and industrial enterprises. We count upon doing this with the full consent of the Sublime Porte, with which we are in the best relations and which should have the greatest interest in facilitating Italy's peaceful and civilizing action.

The Sultan has repeatedly expressed himself in terms of true friendship for Italy and her King. But it will be necessary that such friendly feelings be shared by the Ottoman officials in Tripolitania, who, sometimes, through a misunderstood zeal that is absolutely contrary to the intentions of their Sovereign, have shown towards Italy a distrust which is unjustified and which we cannot tolerate.

The Government has been wrongly accused of negligence and carelessness with regard to Tripolitania. In answering the interpellations of the Hon. Members which are presently to be discussed, it will be easy for me to show, founding my assertions upon facts, how much has been done in that region, and with good results, for commerce, for navigation, for schools, for public assistance, and how it is far from being true that the economic

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action of Italy has been steadily diminishing compared with that of other nations. Along this road the Government intends to persevere.

But, since I am speaking of this subject, it will be well for me to declare, apropos of the alarm and agitation awakened in the public by a false report, that the Government will promote and support, as is its duty, every useful economic initiative within such limits as the conditions and resources of Tripolitania allow, so long as they come from men of purpose and who dispose of the necessary capitals ; but I must at the same time declare that there is no alarm or agitation capable of opening the doors of the Consulta to those who make it their business to promote all sorts of speculation, simply as a means of getting a commission. Such men must not hope for any encouragement from me, just as they never received any from my predecessors.

Tripolitania has been repeatedly the subject of sensational and fantastic reports which have uselessly agitated public opinion. This is the third time in a few years.

In March, 1903, some Italian papers solemnly announced that a coaling station had been secured by the English in the bay of Bomba. This report was qualified by the English Government as an invention unworthy of serious consideration, and, in fact, it soon proved to be devoid of any vestige of truth. But the English Press noticed, not without bitterness, how a section of the Italian Press had, without any investigation as to the truth of such a report, taken occasion to express feelings of distrust which were offensive to England.

In September of last year the report was launched of an alleged secret understanding between England and Turkey relative to the border line between Egypt and

Cyrenaica; an understanding the result of which would have been to noticeably extend the Egyptian territory, thus diminishing the commercial and political value of Tripolitania. The Government did not fail to make diligent inquiries, and even this report proved to be absolutely devoid of truth.

This time it is the turn of an alleged concession for the construction of the port of Tripoli by a French company, equally imaginary, and, as heretofore in the case of England, it has happened that, without troubling to ascertain the facts, doubts offensive for the French Foreign Affairs Minister have been expressed and, later, the French Ambassador to Constantinople has been attacked so violently as to oblige his Government to intervene in his defence by making a public declaration. These unwarranted attacks against the French Government, which acted throughout with perfect straightforwardness, have been noted with displeasure by the Italian Government.

As soon as the report of the concession for the construction of the port of Tripoli to a French company was published, the Government, after having obtained accurate and exhaustive information from Paris, Tripoli, and Constantinople, did not fail to emphatically contradict it through the *Stefani Agency*. It seemed to the excited and impatient public opinion that this contradiction was not given sufficiently early, but the Government, although having sufficient elements to consider the report absolutely fantastic, desired to sift the matter to the bottom, so that its contradiction should result truly efficacious and such as to admit of no reply.

In spite of this some reply has been made, but deprived of any value because not based upon fact and destitute of any vestige of proof or evidence. The impenitent

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alarm-breeders, unable to produce a concession that did not exist, tried to uphold that, at least, it was about to be given. Thereupon the Government's opponents have blamed it for having no knowledge of the transaction; while its supporters have praised it for having, by its firm action, prevented such a concession from being granted.

Now I must repudiate the blame and I cannot honestly accept the praise; both are out of place, because from accurate inquiry made at Constantinople it has been ascertained that, not only has no concession been granted; but no application for such a concession has ever been made. But, it will be asked: "What is the position then with regard to the port of Tripoli?"

Briefly, the port of Tripoli forms part of a series of enterprises which the Sultan has reserved to his Civil List and of which he disposes as he chooses. In October, 1900, the Governor of the Tripoli Vilayet had a project laid down for the construction of the port. This project was sent to the Sultan, who never caused it to be put into execution; repeatedly declaring that when he should decide to construct the port he would himself see to its carrying out. Therefore, it was necessary for the Italian Government to obtain the denial of the report not only from the Sublime Porte, but from the Sultan himself, and only after having obtained it was it able to give out its *communiqué* to the *Stefani Agency*.

It is true, however, that after 1900 the concession for the construction of the port of Tripoli *was* offered upon the Italian, French, and English markets by some speculators and promoters, but these men offered a concession they did not have, and, when cornered, spoke of promises of support received from this or that Pacha and of their more or less imaginary influence with the Sultan.



Still, to completely clear up this question and to assure unquestionably the protection of Italian rights, even after the Sultan's declaration, I invited our Ambassador to point out to His Imperial Majesty that the intentions of Italian policy are peaceful, based upon the maintenance of the *status quo* and inspired by the purpose of consolidating ever more our cordial relations with Turkey. But, just because we wish to maintain these friendly relations, the Italian Government must draw the Sultan's special attention to the grave consequences for Turkey of the granting by her of concessions or privileges in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica which would be opposed to Italian interests, as such a course would oblige the Italian Government to adopt energetic measures.

This communication was made on May 7th, and on the same day the Sultan formally declared to our Ambassador :

(1) That, as to the alleged concession to foreigners of the construction of the port of Tripoli, His Imperial Majesty had heard of it for the first time from a communication by the Grand Vizir, to whom he gave orders to immediately and categorically contradict the report.

(2) That, for the present, His Imperial Majesty has no intention of constructing the port of Tripoli and that, when he shall decide to do so, the work will be carried out by his own Government.

(3) That no concession relating to the port of Tripoli has been granted, nor has it been solicited from any quarter.

(4) That, even if his Government should propose the granting of the aforesaid concession to foreigners, His Imperial Majesty would refuse to comply with this request.

These are the last solemn and exhaustive declarations which I have the honour of communicating to the Senate.

Having thus put an end to polemics and eliminated gossip, all that remains to be done is to quietly resume our work of economic penetration in Tripolitania. This will be the care of the Government ; to this task I will modestly co-operate if Parliament will continue to give me its confidence and support.

\* \* \* \* \*

I cannot follow Senator De Martino through all the various points of his important speech. He has spoken of Tunis, of the "*Convention of 1896 for the partition between France and England of the Tripolitan hinterland.*" These are events of some time ago, which it would be impossible now to remedy. I must only say that they took place at a time when Italy thought she could follow a policy of her own, proceeding alone among other stronger and more powerful nations. To-day we are no longer in those conditions ; our alliances, our friendships, the special pacts which we have stipulated for the protection of our important interests, give us complete assurance and allow us to look with confidence to the future.

As to the question of the border line of Tripolitania ; certainly neither I nor any one else can remedy the consequences of the Act of 1899, relative to the division of the Tripolitan hinterland ; what I can do and is my duty to do (as it will be that of whoever occupies this post), will be to see that nothing prejudicial to Italian interests shall take place in the future, and upon this point I can reassure the Senate, as have done my predecessors, because the question of the border line, both with regard to Egypt and Tunis, is a question that has been settled, and the Oasis of Ghat and Ghadamès, the importance of which has been so often pointed out, form part of Tripolitania even according to the Act which passed between France and England. There is nothing

to fear on this score; and the preoccupations I have often heard expressed are groundless.

This much said, I will add a word about the little that has been done at Tripoli.

Italian importation in Tripolitania; which in 1899 amounted to 1,626,000 liras, to-day amounts to 2,618,000 liras. It is not much, but some progress has been made. In the same way the exportation from Tripoli to Italy has risen to 979,418 liras. The postal service has been better developed by us, also the Royal Schools, which have at present about eleven hundred pupils, and the subsidized ones two hundred. That these schools have had a useful effect is shown by the fact that in Tripolitania; after Arabic, Italian is the language which is most spoken, and it has become so necessary that also other nations have had to adopt it in their schools, because it is an indispensable instrument for whoever in that country wishes to employ his abilities under any form.

Having thus answered briefly to the principal objections of the various speakers, I have nothing more to add; because what I have already said is sufficient. I have assured the Senate that the Government's action will be diligent, but it would not be timely to define it in all its particulars. Parliament has constantly the means of controlling and judging the Government's action, and when it should not correspond to its intentions nor embody the promises made, Parliament can always withhold its sanction, depriving of its confidence the Minister who has not known how to respond to it.

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### IV. SITTINGS OF MAY 12TH AND 13TH, 1905— (CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

Annexation of the Island of Crete by Greece?—The Triple Alliance and Italy's relations with England, France, and the other Powers—Macedonian Reforms: reorganization of the *Gendarmerie* and Financial Reform.

The Hon. Maggiorino Ferraris has brought up the question of our increased military expenditure.

As far as regards our foreign policy, I can assure the Hon. Maggiorino Ferraris that this expenditure—which cannot cause any preoccupation because within the limits of what is strictly necessary and which is not; in spite of what has been said to the contrary, unduly hastened, because it had for some time been demanded—does not mean that the peaceful character of our policy is changed, nor that the international situation is at present less favourable for Italy than it was last year.

The Hon. Maggiorino Ferraris has alluded to the speech by which I outlined last year Italy's position in all the important international questions. But the Hon. Member will recall that this very same speech ended with the affirmation that, even while firmly pursuing a peaceful policy, it is impossible to follow any policy whatever without a strong Army and Navy. Therefore, the increased military expenditure is not in contradiction with what I then said, it is not a sign of any change in our foreign policy and must not give rise to fears and alarms that would be entirely unjustified.

All the speakers have referred to the question of Tripoli and, while declaring themselves satisfied on the whole by my declarations to the Senate, which I will not repeat because it would be superfluous, nor enlarge

upon because sufficiently exhaustive; they have made some suggestions which I shall not fail to take into account.

The Hon. Maggiorino Ferraris has made an accurate analysis of the difficulties of the economic problem in that region and, possibly, some of his too strongly pessimistic observations and conclusions are more subtle than true. Notwithstanding, he has, to my mind, done well in destroying with strong arguments founded upon facts some exaggerated illusions as to the economic conditions of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica and by placing the question upon an essentially practical ground.

The solution of the economic problem of Tripolitania must be preceded—as the Hon. Guicciardini has justly remarked—by serious study, because such questions are not solved by easy formulas. A solution, however, must be attempted, and the Government's duty is to undertake the task promptly and earnestly, because, if Tripolitania may be for us of small economic value, it must not be forgotten that economic penetration in that region comes second to our political interest, and the latter, as every one recognizes, is of the very first importance.

I now owe a few words upon Crete to the Hon. Roberto Galli, who has brought to this Chamber the expression of his ardent phil-Hellenism.

I will say at once that the annexation of the Island of Crete to Greece, which is at present demanded, is impossible, especially on account of the repercussion it would have in the Balkan Peninsula.

Truly, the inhabitants of Crete have not shown themselves very grateful to the Powers who have assured for them a *régime* of liberty and autonomy and have also made in their behalf considerable financial sacrifices. The Hon. Galli will not, I hope, be more of a phil-Hellenist

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than the Greek Government itself, who, through its Prime Minister, has recognized that at the present moment annexation is impossible. I believe, moreover, that the annexationist movement has been fostered by the malcontent which for some time has been latent in the island and which might be remedied—as has been justly remarked by the Hon. Guicciardini—by serious administrative and financial reforms. This, I think, should be the object the Powers should have in view, together with Prince George, their High Commissioner.

It is evident that Italy cannot exercise any action independently from that of England, France, and Russia, and, as negotiations upon the subject are on foot, the Chamber will understand that I can add nothing further upon the subject.

The despatch of two battleships, as I have already said, has been decided upon with the purpose of strengthening our naval contingent, which is the smallest of any maintained there by the Powers, and, above all, of protecting the Italian officers who form part of the *Gendarmerie* and are scattered in various localities throughout the island.

As to the Triple Alliance, there have been expressed some appreciations which I cannot accept.

It has been said that the value of the Triple Alliance has shown itself to be smaller for us than for the other two Powers, our allies, and that in any case one of the greatest advantages we hoped to reap from it is lost since we have presented bills for the increase of our military expenditure. It is not difficult to answer that, while the Triple Alliance dispenses us from exaggerated military expenditure—and that proposed by the Government is not such—it cannot dispense us, as no alliance would, from having an Army and Navy. There is no alliance

which could bring us to disarmament, because the day in which we should actuate such a plan our alliance would cease to have any possible value for any one. It is also idle to subtilize and inquire if this Triple Alliance has benefited a little more or a little less this or that of the allied Powers, when it has shown itself a precious element for the preservation of peace in Europe. We continue to consider it a security and guarantee of peace, and it, therefore, remains one of the most important factors of our policy. And if the German Emperor was the welcome guest of Italy and of her King, if Count Goluchowski returned to me in Venice with equal courtesy and cordiality the visit I paid him at Abbazia, neither could the first of these events have been brought about to strengthen the ties of the Triple Alliance which had never been weakened, nor could the other have taken place with the purpose of improving our relations with Austria-Hungary that were already excellent, nor to perfect an understanding which was already complete.

The programme I outlined just one year ago, which completely guaranteed our interests in the Balkan Peninsula, has been gradually enacted according to our wishes and intentions. All the outstanding questions have been by us discussed in a friendly manner with Austria-Hungary and settled, while Germany could only wish that the understanding between the two Powers, her allies, should not be disturbed. With Russia—being conscious of our great interests in the European East—I endeavoured to maintain friendly relations in the difficult moments which agitated our country; with England and France we had a constant and cordial exchange of views upon the Balkan questions, and both these Powers were inspired in their relations with us, the one, by her ancient, traditional friendship, the other, by

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sentiments of renewed cordiality. Our clear and consistent policy was viewed with confidence by Turkey and with sympathy by the Balkan States.

I believe it will be of interest to the Chamber and the country for me to make a few remarks concerning Macedonia.

It cannot certainly be affirmed that the work of the Civil Agents and the policy of reform in this first year and a half of experiment have given any very considerable results ; still, in order to be just, one must not, on the other hand, go so far as the pessimistic extremes reached by the Hon. Guicciardini ; to be fair in our judgment we must take into account the enormous difficulties with which the Civil Agents have had to contend, and which are known to all.

At all events it would be unjust to not recognize that some useful results have been obtained from the work done by the Civil Agents.

They have distributed assistance widely to the victims of the insurrection, they have provided for the reconstruction of the burnt or destroyed homes, have studied the reform of the system for the collection of the dimes, have elaborated a plan for the abolition of the present system of contracts so harmful to the peasantry and to establish that the latter should pay a sum corresponding to the average impost of the last five years. The inquests carried out by them in consequence of the complaints received have generally obtained a satisfactory result and led to the redress of many injustices and wrongs. But the two essential points of the Macedonian Reforms were to consist in the security for life and property, which was to be obtained through the reorganization of the *Gendarmerie*, and the suppression of abuse through the reorganization of the financial administration. To each



of these requirements the united action of the Powers has attended ; thus, to our mind, the European Concert is maintained and affirmed in the treatment of the Balkan questions.

Most important was the reorganization of the *Gendarmerie*. When General De Giorgis arrived in Macedonia, he was obliged to convince himself that it was not a case of reorganizing a *Gendarmerie*, but of absolutely creating one upon new bases and with fresh elements. In fact, the Ottoman *Gendarmerie* was an undisciplined corps governed by no just technical criterion, utterly failing to respond to the end for which it had been constituted. Moreover, the elements which formed it were not only lacking of the necessary aptitude for the service, but were not even in a position to understand it ; worse still, the *gendarmes*, often enlisted from among people of bad precedents, and irregularly paid, instead of ensuring order and the safety of the population, were the first to exploit it and often acted hand in hand with criminals.

It was, therefore, an entirely new corps which was to be brought into existence, beginning from the very foundations ; a no easy task if one considers that it was not merely a case of having to educate ignorant and uncultivated people, but also to fight against traditions, inveterate habits, and tenacious prejudices. To this work General De Giorgis has devoted himself with faith and resolute energy, and, thanks to him, the *Gendarmerie* is to-day the reform which, in practice, has given the best results.

If General De Giorgis' achievement is worthy of the greatest praise, the work of the Italian officers in the Vilayet of Monastir also deserves special encouragement. Our officers have laboured at the task allotted to them with that seriousness and prudence demanded by the difficulty of the office they had to perform, and have

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devoted themselves to it with admirable zeal and abnegation.

Only people with no experience of local conditions could expect immediate results. Our officers have had indeed to fight against intrinsic difficulties of every kind.

It must also be borne in mind that the Vilayet of Monastir, for its conditions of internal insecurity as well as for its vastness and for the struggle of nationalities which is fought in it, even more fiercely than in the other Macedonian districts, was the one which offered and still offers the greatest difficulties.

Through the wise, energetic and intelligent operation of our officers, aided by the action of our Embassy at Constantinople and of our Consulates, all these difficulties have been gradually decreasing and may be said to have in a great measure been eliminated.

Through the activity shown by our officers in every circumstance, in making the most accurate inquiries, in betaking themselves to the scene of any serious occurrence, through the invariably just and moderating influence they exercise, these officers have secured the confidence of the people and have been able to render important services to the cause of humanity, of order and of justice.

It is a known fact that the work done by our officers has received flattering commendation from every quarter, and the Sultan himself had recently occasion to express to our Ambassador his admiration for them and the full confidence he felt as to the results of their labours.

I must now say a few words upon the Financial Reforms.

In January of the present year the Ambassadors of Austria-Hungary and Russia, founding their request upon the Mürzsteg programme, which provides, among

other reforms, to that relative to the financial reorganization, handed to the Sublime Porte a Memorandum concerning the adoption of some provisions relative to the Administration of the three Macedonian Vilayets and a draft of regulations of which they demanded the acceptance and application, following upon the request made by Turkey, to raise the custom duties upon goods from 8 to 11 per cent. *ad valorem*.

While the Italian Government devoted its attention to the accurate study of this draft of regulations, and submitted in consequence to the two Governments its remarks and reserves upon the subject, the Sublime Porte in its turn answered, on May 5th, informing the two Ambassadors that it had itself provided for the good administration of the three provinces by means of financial regulations drafted in agreement with the Imperial Ottoman Bank, the text of which was joined to the Note, and repeating its demand for an increase in the custom duties.

The fundamental points of the Ottoman regulations were the following: The formation of three regular separate Budgets containing an itemized list of all revenues and expenditures for the three Vilayets; all the revenue to be in the first place devolved to the needs of the civil and military local administration; all deficits to be made good by the Central Ministry of Finance; all surplus to be paid in to the Imperial Treasury. The whole financial management, collections, payments, accounts, etc., to be entrusted to the Imperial Ottoman Bank.

After an exchange of views among the Powers, during which the Italian Government continued to uphold always the fundamental issue of placing the reorganized financial administration under the control of all the

Powers who signed the "*Berlin Treaty*," it was agreed to accept the Turkish counter-proposition, which was, moreover, already in course of application, but with the addition of an article which establishes that, to oversee the execution of the Financial Reforms, the four Governments (Italy, England, France and Germany) would each name a Financial Delegate. The Delegates of the four Powers will act in harmony with the Ottoman General Inspector and with the Austrian and Russian Civil Agents.

The Commission thus appointed will have all the necessary powers to carry out its task and particularly to oversee the regular collection of taxes, including the dimes. The Budgets cannot be passed until approved by the International Commission, which will be empowered to make the necessary modifications. The Commission will be allowed to appoint in each Vilayet a special Inspector. The collective Note which will convey to the Sublime Porte this deliberation of the Powers has been already signed by the Ambassadors in Constantinople.

My declarations will be welcomed by the Chamber, I am sure, no less than by the Hon. Guicciardini. When I had the honour of showing how precise, positive and efficacious was our agreement with Austria-Hungary for the reciprocal renunciation of any occupation of Albania, it was justly remarked that the importance of Albania had been greatly diminished by the reunion to Macedonia of some Albanian districts. I am now glad to be able to tell the Chamber that Count Goluchowski entirely agrees with me in holding that, as soon as (according to the provisions of Article 2 of the Mürzsteg programme) the administrative reform of Macedonia will be carried out, those districts which are of a prevailingly Albanian

character and are to-day aggregated to the Macedonian Vilayets, will have to be restored to Albania proper.

These, gentlemen, are the results of a peaceful and prudent foreign policy, while at the same time duly zealous for the interests of Italy, and I trust you will continue to give it your support.

#### V. SITTING OF JUNE 15TH, 1905—(SENATE)

The Arbitration Treaties—The *Gendarmerie* in Macedonia—The question of Crete.

I must really express my satisfaction for the important discussion to which the Budget for Foreign Affairs has given occasion and in which we have heard most able speakers treat with elevation of thought and efficacy of expression all the most important questions connected with our foreign and colonial policy. It is my duty to make clear all the points that have been discussed without neglecting any of them, because I recognize that they are all equally important. Still, in order to not unduly lengthen the discussion, I will endeavour to be as concise as possible, and, above all, clear, speaking with that frankness which is habitual to me and discarding every rhetorical artifice which could lessen the seriousness of the subject or disturb the equanimity of the appreciations.

In order to devote myself at once to the questions which have given rise to the greatest debate, I will only say a few words upon general international politics, especially European, as the fundamental lines of these politics, which I traced in my last speech before the Chamber of Deputies, both in connection with our position in the Triple Alliance and our relations with Austria-Hungary,—

especially as to our policy in the Balkans—and regarding our relations with France and England, received in both branches of Parliament general approval. It was recognized by all that this policy was the only possible one, the only one in conformity with Italian interests, and that, whoever were to take my place could not undertake to carry out a different one. From the consent of Parliament I draw encouragement to persevere in this policy.

I will add nothing more, for I believe that in foreign affairs the repeating of the same arguments under different forms is not advisable. In fact, when we have found the exact expression of an idea it is well to leave it unaltered, for, if the dilution of the same idea in many words and under many different forms is tedious in every subject, it is absolutely harmful in foreign affairs.

Senator Pierantoni has spoken of the Arbitration Treaties which have been signed with other nations, and has deplored the fact that the idea of arbitration is very much attenuated and limited in its scope by the wording of the treaties themselves, that is to say by the affirmation that the principle of arbitration is not applicable when the honour or vital interest of nations are at stake.

I agree with Senator Pierantoni that this clause greatly diminishes the importance of the treaties, but, as a treaty is a bilateral act and the will of one of the parties being insufficient to stipulate it, Italy has had to adapt herself to the proposed formula, which was the one agreed upon for the first treaty of its kind, that is to say the one between France and England. At all events, we must congratulate ourselves for this first step upon the road of progress, and I do not hesitate to join Senator Pierantoni in the expression of the wish that, with the advance of peaceful ideas, more perfect formulas may be found.

The Hon. Pierantoni has, among other things, expressed an opinion which it is impossible for me to pass in silence. He has absolutely altered the nature of the functions of our *Gendarmerie* in Macedonia. He has spoken of mercenaries who trample upon the aspirations of the people towards liberty, and has said he could not approve that such a task, which is contrary to the principles of civilization and is offensive for those populations, be entrusted to our soldiers. But I must point out to the Hon. Pierantoni that such an appreciation does not correspond in any way to the truth as shown by facts, because our officers, who with so much zeal and with such praiseworthy results unfold their action, are accomplishing good work for the cause of civilization, for they guard and protect the Christian population who looks to them with ever increasing good-will, and the Hon. Pierantoni may rest assured that if, in accordance with his ideas, our officers should be withdrawn from those regions, the cause of civilization would be the one which would most suffer and the Christian populations of those districts who chiefly confide in our protection are those who would most deeply deplore such an ill-advised measure.

The Hon. Pierantoni has next spoken at length upon the question of Crete. With regard to this I will say very little, as I must not forget the reserve incumbent upon me from the fact that we are not alone in Crete, but are acting in agreement with three other Powers, with whom we must proceed apace. I will only say that the despatch of battleships is quite justified, because, noble as the cause of the insurrection may appear to the Hon. Pierantoni, it is certain that it has given occasion to reprehensible actions, as murders, looting and the destruction of property, which it was our duty to prevent, and, above all, to protect the lives of our officers of the *Gendarmerie*

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scattered in various localities throughout the island. The point upon which I do agree is the opportunity of actuating, not so much that panacea of political reform which, in Crete especially, would be of doubtful result, but of seriously applying the administrative and financial reforms. This, it must be recognized, has not been sufficiently thought of up to the present, but Italy has insisted and strongly insists upon this point with the other Powers. As for the rest, I will say only one thing. I admire and respect Senator Pierantoni's feelings of sympathy for Greece, but he must leave it to me, Foreign Affairs Minister, to temper them with what my duty imposes, that is to say with the protection of Italian interests.

### VI. SITTING OF JUNE 14TH, 1906—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

The motion for the reduction of armaments in the English House of Commons.

The Hon. Brunialti has recalled in his speech the fact that I assisted at that sitting of the English Commons during which took place the discussion upon the motion for a reduction of armaments and in favour of peace, and he has expressed the hope that I might associate myself with the noble and elevated words pronounced on that occasion by the Foreign Affairs Minister, Sir Edward Grey.

I am glad to tell the Hon. Brunialti that the sentiments expressed by that illustrious statesman awakened in me feelings of strong sympathy and, at the time, in my position as Ambassador, I called the attention of the



Italian Government to that important discussion. In the same manner to-day, as Minister for Foreign Affairs, I publicly agree in the name of the Government with the humanitarian ideas which, in the historic hall of Westminster, evoked such wide and authoritative consent.

I have always considered that it would be a folly and a crime against our Fatherland, for us alone to weaken our armaments in the midst of powerfully armed European nations, who consider the perfecting of armaments as a guarantee of peace.

It is superfluous for me to add that I have always blamed with you those who, under the pretext of peaceful aspirations, attack the Army which in Italy has been and is an admirable example of patriotism, of sacrifice and of virtue in all public calamities.

It would, nevertheless, on the other hand, be just as great a crime against humanity to not sincerely co-operate with those initiatives which may lead to a unanimous and simultaneous reduction in the armaments of the Great Powers, or which, in any way, may remove the dangers and disasters of war and tend to ensure the inestimable benefits of peace. And, as peace has always been the object of Italian foreign policy, I have no difficulty in answering the Hon. Bruniati that the Government will give its Representatives at the Hague instructions to second the English initiative. With this I consider I have answered the Hon. Bruniati, but I must ask the Chamber to allow me to add one more word. I wish it were possible for the proposals of general disarmament to have a practical and immediate actuation. Unfortunately, there are not a few who, considering how difficult it is to find a concrete formula which would guarantee all concerned of the simultaneousness of this disarmament, are somewhat sceptical as to the result of these initiatives,

and fear that for some time to come they may remain under the form of generous aspirations.

Be this as it may, I affirm and consider that the statesmen who have a full sense of their duty and responsibility can powerfully contribute to the maintenance of peace by acting with calm, moderation and a conciliating spirit in those moments of excitement and alarm which occur from time to time in international relations.

Count Goluchowski, speaking to the Delegations and referring to the excellent relations between Austria-Hungary and Italy, remarked that the straightforward attitude of the two Governments ensured these good relations against every attempt of the "*irresponsibles*." This was a most happy phrase.

Those who, in all countries, constitute a permanent peril for peace are the "*irresponsibles*," be it by enlarging and embittering small differences through the action of the Press, be it by starting sudden and impetuous currents of public opinion. A Government that is sure of its programme, of its strength, of the support of Parliament and of the country, must itself direct foreign policy and never permit or tolerate in any way that it be given over to the action of the "*irresponsibles*."

In accordance with this idea, upon which is based the firm attitude of the Government, I believe that—while hastening with our wishes the carrying out of the English proposals—it will be possible also from these benches to render a real service to the cause of peace.

## VII. SITTING OF DECEMBER 18TH, 1906—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

Defence of the Triple Alliance—The Anglo-German relations and Italy's position with her ally and friend—Declarations on the alleged antagonism between England and Germany by Prince von Bülow, Minister von Tschirschky, Sir Edward Grey, Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, Mr. Winston Churchill, and Lord Avebury—The relations between Italy and Austria—The Albanian and Macedonian questions and the conflict among the Christian populations in the Balkan Peninsula—The Island of Crete—The interchange of alliances, of friendships, of *ententes cordiales* among European nations.

Since the discussion upon the last Budget for Foreign Affairs two ministerial crises have taken place, which brought successively upon these benches the Hon. di San Giuliano and the Hon. Guicciardini. These two able men have followed upon general lines the same policy I had unfolded during three years of office. I note this, not to draw from it the gratification of a personal satisfaction, but for a higher and more unselfish reason, that of assuring all those who in the civilized world have dealings with us, that they may make assignment upon the continuity of our foreign policy, because it outlives our internal Parliamentary vicissitudes and is independent of the consecutive coming to power of different men or parties, an occurrence which, in the Parliamentary *régime*, cannot fail to take place with more or less frequency.

Allow me then to loudly affirm from this tribune that Italy can give complete assurance that the foreign policy that is willed by a large majority of Parliament and of the country, and in which agree men of different parties, and, I will add, will always necessarily have to agree whoever has the responsibility of Government, is and cannot be subject to shock, deviation or change.

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This is a source of strength for a nation and an essential element for the seriousness and success of its action. I wish for my country—and never was there a more fervent wish than mine—that at each change of Ministry the Italian Foreign Affairs Minister may speak of his predecessor in the same terms in which a Minister of the new Liberal Cabinet in England spoke of his Conservative predecessor: “When the present Cabinet came to power, it had the good fortune of finding that English foreign policy had been conducted by Lord Lansdowne in such a manner and upon such lines as to make it for us a pleasure as well as a duty to follow in his path to the great advantage of the continuity of our international relations.”

I believe that all in this Chamber unite in recognizing the advantages of continuity, even those who—let them not be offended if I openly say so—with singular inconsistency agitate and alarm themselves at every rustling of leaves and demand a change in the direction of our foreign policy. The Foreign Affairs Minister, however, must possess calmer nerves than those of the men who would want to make of him a weathercock which turns at every wind. He must aim with tenacity to his end, from which neither renewed difficulties, newspaper clamours, nor popular agitations must have the power of diverting him.

This necessarily implies that in my speech of to-day I cannot say new things. If there is any one who expects surprises or *coups de main* from me, I must tell him that my speech will prove a delusion.

I will purely and simply confirm the declarations which I have already had occasion to make before Parliament, referring to what has taken place in the international field since the discussion of the last Budget for Foreign Affairs,

and answering to the accusations, objections and doubts which have been expressed by some speakers. I owe a word of thanks to all those who have taken part in this discussion and who have expressed themselves in terms of the greatest courtesy for me ; to those who with their objections have given me occasion to more clearly express my thoughts, to those who by their support give me encouragement and sanction, in a word, to all, friends or opponents, who with important speeches have contributed to elevate the tone of this discussion.

Now let us speak at once of the Triple Alliance, *Ab Jove principium !* I consider it a fortune to be able to speak soon after Prince von Bülow and Count von Aehrenthal, and to have an opportunity of fully and cordially concurring in their warm and efficient defence of the Triple Alliance.

It continues to be the basis of our policy, and to it we intend to remain faithful. May this explicit affirmation serve to show the error of those who from time to time, upon the slightest ground declare it weakened and predict its early end.

It has been said that the Triple Alliance has been modified and transformed because it has become essentially peaceful. Let me here point out a contradiction into which the Hon. Barzilai has fallen which may not have been noticed by all, as he is one of the ablest and most subtle men who sit in this Chamber, whose reasoning has all the appearance of being logical, even when totally devoid of that quality. He has begun by affirming, in fact, that the present political situation is dangerous, and holds every probability of a conflict, while he has ended by saying that, if the Triple Alliance must serve for the maintenance of peace, it may be considered quite useless, since peace is desired by all.

But I believe, moreover, that the Triple Alliance has *always* been peaceful, although this quality of being an efficient instrument for peace may have been brought more fully to light at the present moment, after it has been seen that it does not prevent or hinder in any way the most cordial relations of the Powers within the alliance with those outside it.

In the seventeenth century another Triple Alliance had the power of pacifying Europe. Of it, in his essay upon William Temple, Macaulay says it produced general peace and, therefore, deserves the universal praise it won. And I—making Macaulay's phrase mine—will say that the Triple Alliance of to-day deserves the greatest praise, because it has given Europe long years of peace.

The advantages conferred upon us by the Triple Alliance have been put in doubt, especially by the Hon. Barzilai and the Hon. Bissolati, but we owe it to this alliance to have been able to follow an independent policy and to have been spared the painful surprises which many nations, like the Italian, have met with in periods of isolation.

But there are some who, far from admitting that the Triple Alliance has allowed us to follow an independent policy, try to insinuate that we form part of it in conditions of inferiority and inequality with respect to our two allies. Nothing is further from the truth. If I have said that the Triple Alliance places Italy in a position to carry out an independent policy, I have not used this expression as a mere phrase. Three years of experience in the direction of foreign affairs have confirmed me in this conviction.

Upon a foundation of erroneous affirmations, a legend of indiscrete German interferences, harmful to our dignity and interests, has been brought into existence. I can

completely destroy this legend. All the reports which on various occasions have been published to accredit it are purely inventions. Already Prince von Bülow, with the habitual vivacity of his spirit, has made short work of the voices put in circulation with regard to an alleged German action in Tripolitania. But I have something more to add.

Last July, while I was negotiating the "*Convention for Abyssinia*" in London with the English Minister, Sir Edward Grey, and the French Ambassador Cambon, some important and authoritative newspapers published that the prolonging of the negotiations was due to the pressure brought to bear upon me by the German Government in order that I should throw up the intended agreement.

I must declare in the most explicit manner that there was no shadow of truth in this report. The German Government, (and in so saying I answer to the Hon. Barzilai), did not in the least interfere in this matter, and showed itself very grateful to the Italian Government for having spontaneously, and with the knowledge of the French and English Governments, communicated to it the text of the "*Convention*" as soon as drafted and before it was signed and made public.

Therefore, this question which, it was feared by many, could have created difficulties in the Italo-German relations, was instead an occasion for consolidating them, because it gave Germany a fresh proof of the loyalty and sincerity of our policy.

I should be uselessly taking up the time of the Chamber if I tried to gather all the incorrect and misleading reports which have been put in circulation by the opponents of the Triple Alliance. But I must strongly affirm that I have never failed to adequately protect the dignity of

Italy confided to my care, and that never have our allies thought to belittle or offend it.

I will not speak of the passing clouds of the "*Algeciras Conference*." It is useless to rake up burnt-out embers. Moreover, Prince von Bülow has in his last speech definitely closed this question, remarking that the engagements entered into by Italy towards France are not opposed to the Triple Alliance and recognizing Italy's correctness as well as that of her illustrious Representative. And I must say that as to Prince von Bülow's attitude I had no doubts, because when in June last I was again called to the direction of Foreign Affairs, I sent word to him to the effect that I wished to take up my relations with him at the same point where we had left them after our meeting at Baden Baden, in which we had found ourselves in perfect agreement upon all the international questions, and Prince von Bülow sent back word to me that such was also his desire.

With Germany, therefore, our relations as allies are upon the basis of absolute equality and of the greatest reciprocal consideration, and the same may be said of Austria-Hungary. But I must still meet the one objection which has made the most impression upon public opinion, that is to say the one arising from the danger to peace which is a consequence of the political and economic antagonism between Germany and England and the impossible position in which Italy would find herself in case of a conflict between those powerful nations.

Already at the approach of the present discussion the Hon. Barzilai had given the cry of alarm in an interview, and the Hon. Bissolati has said in a letter that the speakers for the Opposition should corner me in order to draw from me clear and explicit declarations on the subject.

Truly all the speakers who have taken part in the



discussion have shown themselves in favour of the Triple Alliance. Only the Hon. Bissolati dreams for our country a position which it pleases him to call of "*independence*," but which I, with a more appropriate term, would call of "*isolation*," and should consider possible in one case only, that is to say if Italy, like some other countries, should be disposed to ask for her neutralization and to renounce following any policy outside her own borders.

The Hon. Barzilai and Bissolati have then insisted upon the chief argument of the Anglo-German rivalry. Now, inasmuch as regards Italy's position in the Triple Alliance, it is evident that those who in the interests of Italy stipulated this alliance, have considered the necessity for her of always maintaining friendly relations with England. My predecessor, Hon. Guicciardini, has already made some declarations to the Senate upon this point. I have nothing more to add, because no new event has taken place to modify in this respect the direction of our foreign politics.

I may, however, discuss the suggestion of a conflict between Germany and England, which some speakers have pointed out as probable. Now, if this probability existed, it should affect not ourselves only, but Austria as well, who finds herself with regard to England in our identical position as a maritime Power, who has with England relations no less cordial than ours, which are founded upon an even more ancient tradition. In fact, from the fifteenth century to this day, we have assisted to the formation and dissolution of the most diverse groupings of Powers, but friendship with England has always remained one of the foundations of Austrian politics. Well, then, why has this anxiety failed to manifest itself in Austria as well as in Italy?

The reason is most simple : because there is no one in Austria who seriously believes in the possibility of a conflict between England and Germany. At all events, the supreme interest which Italy and Austria have in preventing such an occurrence, places them in the first line in fostering the movement of bringing together their ally and the nation which is their friend, and this movement has the sympathy and support of the most noted political men in Germany and in England.

To what safer indication, to what more reliable testimony may we have recourse in judging of the actual relations between those two great nations and of foreseeing their future development than the opinions publicly expressed by these men ? To what other more trustworthy source can my pessimistic opponents have recourse in order to give likelihood to their assumption of the possibility of a conflict ?

As far as Germany is concerned, must I repeat what has been so efficiently said by Prince von Bülow in his very recent speech before the Reichstag ? He strongly and clearly affirmed that, if between Germany and England there have been some misunderstandings, there are no reasons for a political conflict, much less for a war, and many reasons which advise them to proceed in agreement.

Prince von Bülow gave great importance to this part of his speech, dwelling upon it more at length than upon the others, showing how keenly he wished to clear any doubt upon this subject from the minds of his hearers, and whoever recalls his efficacious argumentation must agree that he fully obtained his end.

It is important to note that last year Prince von Bülow, speaking of the relations between England and Germany, was less optimistic than he has showed himself at present

to be. This serves to point out how much these relations have improved. In Germany, the first manifestation of this improvement was the speech delivered by Minister von Tschirschky about the end of last May, a short time after which the meeting between King Edward and the Emperor William took place.

Minister von Tschirschky, who was recently our welcome guest in Rome, expressed himself with these significant words, which I like to faithfully quote :

“Austria-Hungary and Italy are in the best relations with England, and we welcome these friendly relations most heartily, and I believe to be in complete accord with the Reichstag in adding that we welcome with the greatest satisfaction every sign of improvement, as shown through public opinion, in the relations between ourselves and England.”

In England, where political men are in the habit of speaking more frequently in public, we find numerous manifestations in favour of friendly Anglo-German relations.

In October of last year Sir Edward Grey, then not yet Foreign Secretary, said that the flame of dissension aroused by the Press between the two countries was burning itself out, adding that the desire for an improvement of relations with Germany would not find in England any opponent.

The fear of a conflict with Germany did not even cross the mind of Prime Minister Balfour who, a few days later, remarked that, as far as human sight could reach, he saw a serene prospect before him and thought he could safely prophesy for his own country and the world at large a long era of peace. Nor did any such fear disturb the Foreign Secretary, Lord Lansdowne, who protested against those who supposed that the agreements with

Japan and with France could render less friendly the relations of England with other Powers.

A few days later Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, then leader of the Opposition, repeated and supported the words of the Foreign Secretary, declaring he did not see any serious obstacle to a cordial understanding between England and Germany, adding :

“ Surprise and condemnation are awakened within me by the articles of a section of the English and German Press, which foster rivalry between the two nations who have no reasons for not being good friends.”

More recently, while I was in England as the Representative of Italy, I had occasion to witness manifestations no less eloquent. The Lord Chancellor declared it to be the duty of all good citizens of Great Britain to make every effort to maintain friendship with Germany.

The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Winston Churchill, remarked there was no reason capable of justifying an antagonism or a struggle between the English and German people.

Lord Avebury, better known among scientists under the name of John Lubbock, with which he has signed his principal works, expressed himself thus : “ Far from entertaining jealousy or spite towards Germany, we are glad to see her prosperous and happy. All, or almost all, Englishmen wish to promote friendship between the two countries.”

Here I will stop; to not multiply my quotations. To such eloquent affirmations of men who are in power or that have been and may return there, what can be opposed ? Nothing but the embittering and irritating controversy of a section of the Press of the two countries. But what value has this ? I do not wish to judge it myself, but will refer to the severe estimate of it

pronounced by the same political men in Germany and in England.

Prince von Bülow remarked in the Reichstag, with a synthetic and incisive phrase, that the newspaper men of both countries had grievously sinned.

I will quote only one of the opinions expressed by English public men, leaving aside many others I had gathered here. The Under-Secretary for the Colonies, Mr. Winston Churchill, remarked : " One of the adverse influences which the two people must guard against is that of the so-called patriotic Press of the two countries. From this Press may the Lord deliver us ! There is a class of writers in England and Germany who depict the two Powers as preparing to attack one another. Against these foolish fancies, against these unworthy suppositions, the good sense of the two people protests ! "

There have also been two distinguished men who have not shrunk from accusing the jingoist Press of speculation. Lord Avebury has publicly said : " Newspapers can press public opinion to war or peace. Unfortunately there are some newspaper men who believe that a warlike attitude procures more readers than a peaceful one."

And the actual Prime Minister, Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, expressed in an interview all his indignation against some papers with a wide circulation, who incite public opinion, who aim only at making a sensation, to whom every means seems legitimate so long as it draws the public's attention and with it the inclination to buy the newspaper in question.

I have spoken of the efforts which public men are making to better the relations between England and Germany and of the obstacles met with in the intemperance of a section of the Press of the two countries. Well, gentlemen, does it not strike you that in so doing I have

spoken also of Italy and Austria-Hungary, who, apart from the tie of alliance, find themselves, inasmuch as regards the conduct of their statesmen and the attitude of a section of their Press, in an identical situation ? Just as there have been moments of violent contention between the English and German Press, so have there been between the Italian and Austrian, which have violently alarmed public opinion, leading even to the belief in the imminence of a conflict.

It is fortunate that everywhere the men at the Government have shown themselves more calm and more wise than that section of the Press which gives way to culpable exaggerations and provocations, and which, as was justly observed to me by a distinguished man, constitutes the principal, if not the only true danger for European peace.

Count von Aehrenthal said recently at the Delegations that both in Italy and Austria public opinion is sometimes nervous and easily misled. I fully share his views, but in so doing I make a slight change and will say that public opinion is nervous just because it is misled.

When a section of the Press of the two countries tries to create an incident out of every insignificant event, exaggerating and inventing the circumstances attending upon it, sowing agitation and alarm broadcast, exciting passions, fears, indignation, it is only natural that public opinion should be moved, should become nervous and that the men responsible for government should have difficulty in reassuring it.

It has often been deplored that in matters concerning foreign affairs there is not a decided direction of public opinion as there is a decided direction of government. But how is this to be attained if the most simple events are so often presented to public opinion under sensational and fantastic colours ; if it is obliged to look at everything

through a magnifying glass or in those concave or convex mirrors which distort the images that they reflect ?

In September last some Italian papers gave themselves up to the most senseless controversy upon the alleged capture of an Austrian torpedo-boat in our territorial waters and upon manœuvres of bombardment alleged to have been executed by the Austrian fleet in the waters of Ancona. They went so far that the word *war* itself was lightly and imprudently pronounced.

This tempest appeased, there are now some Austrian newspapers which, suddenly seized as by a fit of frenzy, demand, in the first place, provisions of defence against extraordinary Italian armaments which have never existed, and, secondly, try to distort and diminish the clear meaning of the sincerely friendly expressions for Italy pronounced at the Delegations by Count von Aehrenthal.

Well, I must here resolutely declare that Count von Aehrenthal and myself are resolved to proceed in perfect agreement in all questions, to treat—as he well observed—with a cool head and with feelings of sincere reciprocal good-will any incident which may arise, and to hold in no account the manifestations which we have both deplored and deplore. And here, gentlemen, apropos of what I have said of the Press I do not wish to be misunderstood. First of all I have spoken of a section only of the Press, because fortunately there are newspaper men who perform a noble mission of civilization and peace. Moreover, if my words have been severe, it is because I recognize the immense power of the Press and the always more important function which it is destined to perform with the advance of civilization.

The efforts of the Italian and Austro-Hungarian Governments to perfect their understanding and place it upon

solid bases must be directed towards promoting everything that may tend to bring together the two nations and to avoid with care all that may arouse susceptibilities, anger, or distrust. What they must desire and promote, each in its own country, is a wider and surer consent of public opinion which may lead the two people to a better understanding of each other.

Herbert Spencer created in the philosophy of finalities a new word, the "*unknowable*," to indicate the regions inaccessible to human thought. A man gifted with a strange but great talent, Thomas Quincey, had already created in psychology a new word, the "*uncommunicable*," which is that sentiment by which one refuses to put into words a thought one fears not to be able to adequately express, or which may not be by others understood.

The "*uncommunicable*" is the mysterious cause of so many misunderstandings among individuals as well as among communities. It is what creates an abyss between the minds of men as between those of nations. Now, what is needed is that the "*uncommunicable*" should disappear from between the two allied people and that the word be pronounced which determines a current of concord and opens the collective mind of both.

Coming to the special questions which interest most the two countries, I will say that some speakers have mentioned them without taking into any account what at other times I had the honour of declaring to Parliament. Is it again necessary for me to condemn the "*irredentist*" manifestations in Italy? I did so resolutely, openly, unmindful of unpopularity in moments in which these manifestations caused serious embarrassment to the Government in the explication of its policy. It would be superfluous to again take up the subject at present,



when it may be said that such manifestations have almost ceased to exist. It cannot be denied that since 1904 there has been a slow but steady improvement in the feeling of Italian public opinion towards Austria-Hungary.

As to the Albanian and Macedonian questions, have I not sufficiently expressed my views on other occasions, examining them under every aspect and clearly defining our interests and intentions ?

Have I not already said, and does not every one know, that in the Macedonian question our interests are protected by the conditions of our alliance, and in the Albanian question by the agreement between Count Goluchowski and Marquis Visconti Venosta ? Who can say that, working upon these foundations, I have not continued to protect Italian interests in the East ?

Without speaking at length of what has been done in favour of the latter, beginning from the appointment of General De Giorgis up to the end of 1905, I refer those who might wish greater elucidations to the "*Green Book*" published on Macedonia.

A great many improvised specialists have come forward, offering formulas and prescriptions for harmonizing Italian and Austro-Hungarian interests in the East. But all these remedies are not wanted, because we have up to the present proceeded in full accord with Austria-Hungary and will continue to do so in the future. It has been said that the alliance and our special understanding with regard to Albania are purely negative, as they do not contain any reciprocal undertaking except that of maintaining the *status quo* in the East and more especially of not occupying Albania under any circumstances, and it is demanded that some positive agreement between Italy and Austria-Hungary take place. But to this demand I might reply with the well-known dictum of

legal men : *Quod petis intus habes*. In fact, in my conversations with Count Goluchowski, which were not simply pleasure excursions, as has been insinuated, but which gave positive and practical results, we found each other perfectly agreed in affirming that, whenever the maintenance of the *status quo* should no longer be possible, the solution which Italy and Austria-Hungary would together advocate would be that of the political autonomy of the Balkan Peninsula upon the principle of nationality. This I have already reported to Parliament and it is not a negative, but a truly positive programme. It is certainly a disinterested one, but it is a case of saying that in the East disinterestedness is advised by our most vital interests. I reject, therefore, the advice which has been given me of proposing to Austria-Hungary the partition of territories or to urge her to occupations beyond those contemplated by the "*Berlin Treaty*," while demanding territorial compensation for ourselves.

Such an action would be in contradiction with the principles in virtue of which Italy has attained her unity, would be in contrast with the criterions which have directed our actions so far, would present dangers for ourselves, since it would create a precedent which might in the future be used against us, would mar in one word all our policy in the East.

Undoubtedly my understanding with Count Goluchowski may be better defined and perfected in friendly exchanges of opinion with Count von Aehrenthal, as he himself has suggested in answering to various speakers at the Delegations ; but the fundamental principle of that understanding must remain unchanged, because it is the most apt to maintain and make ever more complete the agreement between Austria-Hungary and Italy. This policy is welcomed by the Ottoman Government

with which we are in very good relations, because it is founded upon the preservation of the integrity of its territory, while it inspires the confidence of the Balkan States, since in any event it recognizes that preference should be given to the principle of nationality.

In following this policy we are in agreement with the other Powers who signed the "*Berlin Treaty*," who, while having given a special mandate to Austria-Hungary and Russia for the execution of the Mürzsteg programme, have not renounced their right of having their say in Balkan affairs.

I have mentioned our excellent relations with the Balkan States. We are developing fresh connections and commercial exchanges with them. You have lately approved and passed the commercial treaty with Bulgaria ; in these days our Delegates have signed at Bukarest the treaty with Roumania ; shortly will be opened under promising auspices the commercial negotiations with Servia.

As to Greece, that nation learnt with rejoicing of the very cordial reception received in Rome by her Sovereign, the welcome guest of the King of Italy.

Before going any further I should report to the Chamber what has been done in Macedonia with the co-operation of Italy, since the publication of the "*Green Book*." But what has been said by Count von Aehrenthal at the Delegations conveys the situation with such impartiality and such truthfulness, discarding at the same time both exaggerated optimism and pessimism, that I can fully associate myself to his words. There remains, therefore, very little for me to add.

I will not enter into the technical details of the Financial Reform. It was only on November 9th, 1906, that the Sublime Porte declared to integrally accept all the conditions made by the Powers to the increase of the custom

duties, and it will, therefore, be necessary to wait before judging the results of the reform, which is to be supervised by an International Commission, in which we are represented by Commander Maissa, our Consul General.

One of the conditions imposed by the Powers was that the Porte should pledge itself to satisfy all the demands put forward by General De Giorgis in order to render the *Gendarmerie* efficient and useful; therefore, everything leads us to hope that more rapid and more complete results may be had, although those obtained so far, through great difficulties, are not inconsiderable. All render full justice to the enlightened and zealous action of the Italian organizer of the *Gendarmerie*, General De Giorgis, and equal praise is universally tributed to the conscientious and intelligent work of the Italian officers, to whom, as is known, was allotted the widest and most difficult field of action, the Vilayet of Monastir. This field of action has recently been also increased by the addition of the district of Serfidjé, in which, heretofore, the *Gendarmerie* was under the command of Belgian officers in the direct service of Turkey.

The populations of those regions turn with always greater confidence to our officers. In the district of Serfidjé, their permanent residence not having yet been fixed upon, all the towns are eagerly disputing for the possession of the garrison. This shows the regard which our officers have won, and I believe I am interpreting the wishes of Parliament in sending a greeting to those who so worthily uphold the name of Italy.

But one of the great difficulties encountered by the Powers in the work of pacifying Macedonia is the violent, cruel struggle among those same Christian populations in the interests of whom the reforms are being enacted. Armed bands have committed and continue to commit

murders; arson; and looting, perpetuating a state of affairs that is an outrage to civilization and constitutes a serious danger. The formation of such bands is encouraged and alimented by the Christian populations in the States bordering the Ottoman Empire. The Italian Government has always associated itself to the admonishments given and to the steps taken by the Powers to put an end to this barbarous situation and will associate itself in the future to the more serious and more decisive measures which may be deemed advisable by the united Powers.

To still more complicate and aggravate the situation; the Greco-Roumanian conflict has arisen, for which a solution has not yet been found, because, while the Roumanian Government asks Greece to prevent the persecution of the Kutzo-Valachs by the Greco-Macedonian bands and to use her influence upon the Patriarchate of Constantinople to obtain its recognition of the Imperial Iradé in favour of the Roumanians, allowing them to say Mass in their own language, the Greek Government asserts it has no means of satisfying either of these demands. The Italian Government, in agreement with the other Powers, has not failed to interpose its influence in favour of the termination of a conflict among two countries to which Italy is bound by feelings of friendship; a conflict, moreover, which is prejudicial to the interests of those countries themselves, while it is deplorable from the general point of view of the tranquillity of the European East.

You doubtless expect a word from me concerning the Island of Crete, and I will briefly touch upon this question. I can say, without fear of being charged with excessive optimism, that the conditions of the island have improved. There was a period of disorder and revolt, which compelled the Powers to first re-establish order by force of

arms and then to appoint a Commission to suggest the indispensable reforms in the administration of the island. The Commission submitted its report, which held invaluable suggestions and useful proposals. Meanwhile Prince George sent in his resignation of the office of High Commissioner to the Powers, who, accepting the proposal of the King of Greece, named as his successor a Greek statesman, Mr. Zaimis. It really seems as if the King of Greece had chosen with a happy hand. According to the unanimous reports received by us as well as by the other Powers, the wise, moderating and conciliatory spirit of Mr. Zaimis has calmed the strife of parties and brought peace to the island. In view of this, the Powers, by a Note addressed to the High Commissioner, have consented that an amnesty be granted to those convicted in the recent disorders, that the martial law be in a great measure abrogated, limiting the jurisdiction of the military tribunals to the offences committed against the international authorities, promising the suppression of this jurisdiction even for the Mussulmans as soon as the High Commissioner should announce to the Powers the inauguration of the new judiciary system contemplated in the scheme of reform.

In the meanwhile the Italian Government has judged that the moment has arrived for bringing into effect its intention of withdrawing from Crete the officers and subalterns of the Italian *Carabineer* Corps, who, after having organized with general approval the *Gendarmerie* Corps of Crete, had remained up to the present in its command. In truth we had for some time been contemplating this measure, but in consequence of the strong pressure of the other three protecting Powers, who urged that until all danger of disorder should be removed it was necessary not to deprive the island of the presence

of these efficient and highly praiseworthy officers of our Army, we were obliged to delay its execution.

Now that calm has been restored in the island we have judged that their task may be considered completed. They will, therefore, return to the home garrisons at the end of the present month.

On November 26th the Cretan Assembly manifested its gratitude for the inestimable services rendered by our *Carabineers*, assuring the Italian Government that this important service rendered to the people of Crete will not be cancelled from its memory.

I have so far spoken almost exclusively of our relations with our allies and incidentally with Russia, inasmuch as concerns her action with Austria-Hungary in the East. With regard to Russia I must add that the commercial negotiations are going on and that on both sides there is the greatest good-will and the most friendly intentions, a fact which leads us to hope that the difficulties inherent to the nature of the task may be overcome.

I must now devote a few words to two friendly nations; France and England. Our relations with France are friendly and cordial. In Italy there have been many people who have predicted, (and this prediction has been to-day repeated once more from the Parliamentary tribune), that we shall one day be obliged to *choose* between our alliances and our friendships. Well, so long as the Triple Alliance will continue in the peaceful rôle which is its characteristic, and so long as the Powers who are our friends will persevere in the peaceful policy they are now following, we shall not have to *choose* nor to decide; we shall have only to *continue* in our present policy, by which the fidelity to alliances does not prevent our maintaining our friendships, thus assuring the peace of Europe.

This is not artifice, it is not machiavelism, it is not a

double policy, as has wrongly been said ; but it is the simple, plain road to follow, which presents itself inevitably to whoever really wishes the preservation of peace. And as this wish is at the present day shared by all the men who have the responsibility of Government of all great nations, it cannot cause surprise that the Foreign Affairs Ministers of the other Powers, speaking of the relations among European States and of their several groupings, should have made upon this subject declarations very similar to mine. If this is machiavelism one must say that there is a Machiavel at the direction of Foreign Affairs in each of the principal States of Europe.

It has been said that this interchange of alliances, of friendships, of special agreements, of *ententes cordiales* is greatly complicated. And so it may be, but what of that ? I bless this complication when what is benefited by it is the cause of peace. Who cannot want peace ? Who can dwell without a feeling of horror upon the terrible consequences of a war among the Great Powers of Europe ? Who could without eternal remorse lightly expose his own country to an unnecessary war ? If a war among the Great Powers should unhappily ever occur, its consequences could be summed up in one phrase—the general bankruptcy of Europe.

Once before, more than two years ago, I had to uphold against those who were incredulous or pessimistic that Italian foreign policy should consist in the unfolding of this programme : *To maintain and consolidate the Triple Alliance, to maintain and consolidate our friendship with France and England.* But I hastened to add :

“ I believe firmly in the success of this policy, but upon one condition, that is to say, that in our relations with Germany and France we conform ourselves to the greatest sincerity and loyalty. I therefore affirm that



the declarations which I make in Parliament are in complete conformity with those I have made separately to the Representatives of each of the two States. *No reservation, no hidden meaning, no ambiguity.* Such are the characteristics of Italian foreign policy."

Returning from England to Italy I had the honour of personally presenting to the President of the French Republic in Paris the thanks of the Italian Government for the efficient and sincere support given by France to the important operation of the conversion of our Public Debt. I am glad to repeat to-day from this tribune the expression of these sentiments and I am also glad to recall how the Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Pichon, in one of the first speeches delivered by him before the Chamber, expressed himself in courteous and delicate terms for our country.

In England I have had occasion to personally note how many sympathies are awakened by the name of Italy, and I have had the pleasure of publicly manifesting, as Italy's Representative, how strong and popular the friendship for Great Britain is among us ; and I consider it my good fortune that the mission entrusted to me should have procured me the honour of often approaching the Sovereign, who makes use of the very great *prestige* which surrounds his person, both in the midst of his people and throughout the world, to fulfil a noble mission of peace.

Sources of dissension among Italy, France, and England could have arisen from the colonial questions. Well, the "*Conventions for Abyssinia*," which were signed last Friday in London, concerning the commerce of arms in Africa, have conciliated the respective interests and regulated with reciprocal satisfaction all the questions upon which the three States could have found themselves at variance. These "*Conventions*," the particular dispositions

of which I will speak of at the proper time; guarantee us from unpleasant surprises or dangerous adventures in Africa; while they confirm the friendship of the three nations.

I know already that it will be said : " What is the use of this promising outlook for peace if it does not deter the Government from presenting proposals for the re-enforcement of our military organization ? " But these proposals are not meant to face a serious or abnormal situation. Something very different would be needed if there were serious or imminent danger of war. They represent instead what is strictly necessary if we mean to possess an Army that is not a vain semblance. In this measure our military proposals must not disturb any one and cannot certainly cause doubts in any quarter as to our peaceful intentions.

To oppose the Government's proposals it would not be enough to show that there is no danger of war, it would be necessary to demonstrate that it is possible, even under the most peaceful provisions, to dispense with an Army, and this in the midst of a peaceful but armed Europe, which is unanimous in affirming that it holds its weapons well sharpened as the surest way of preserving peace.

Theoretically this may seem a paradox, but I must not discuss theories. I simply note a fact which is evident and undeniable.

Honourable Members ! I have reached the end of that part of my speech which concerns general politics. I trust that my words may have proved as convincing as they have been sincere, that my action may have appeared to you as efficient as it has been earnest, and that you may continue to give your confidence to a man who has come before you with a high sense of his duties, conscious of his great responsibilities, but with the radiant vision before him of the future of the Fatherland.

## VIII. SITTING OF DECEMBER 28TH, 1906—(SENATE)

Italy's commercial expansion—"Convention for Ethiopia" with France and England.

The Hon. Carafa d'Andria has begun his speech by deploring the absence of a directing public opinion in questions of foreign politics. This is a point which has been often touched upon in Parliament, and upon which I have had occasion of expressing my opinion. I can now only add that, for my part, I have endeavoured to bring my modest contribution to the formation of this public opinion upon foreign affairs, speaking always with the greatest sincerity and frankness. Moreover, if I have given to my speech before the other House a more ample development than is customary, and have faced without reserve the most burning questions, I have done so precisely with the intention that public opinion should be able to form a correct estimate of the Government's ideas upon all the questions which at the present moment form part of the international situation.

In matters of foreign politics, I believe that once one has given to one's thought the most adequate expression it is not only useless but harmful to repeat that same thought under a different form. Such a course can only generate confusion and doubt, while I again declare I am most anxious that there should be no misunderstanding or uncertainty whatever about the meaning of my words.

I will, therefore; not repeat under different form the very exhaustive declarations which I have already had occasion to make before the other House, in so far as regards our international relations, and which have been

fully confirmed by the subsequent declarations of the most eminent European statesmen and the most authoritative Press of Europe, and will limit myself to confirming them in their entirety.

I will not follow, therefore, Senator Carafa d'Andria in all his remarks concerning the Eastern question. I pointed out myself before the Chamber the difficulties encountered in the problem of reform in Macedonia, but I said also that the full agreement existing upon this question between Italy and Austria-Hungary should be a cause of encouragement and hope for the future. This agreement is founded first of all upon the preservation of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, of which we shall always be the most strenuous supporters, and upon absolute, reciprocal disinterestedness which contemplates even the most remote possibilities.

Senator Carafa d'Andria has then mentioned that new and special character of emulation among great nations which is becoming very marked and is taking always more the form of a competition in commercial expansion. And he has also urged Italy to take part in this highly praiseworthy competition, which characterizes and embodies modern progress.

I have already had occasion to say before this illustrious Assembly that in this connection too much is expected from the initiative of the State, and that if Italy does not obtain in this field results equal to those of other nations it must be frankly avowed that it is because our country is lacking in courageous private enterprise, and Italian capitalists are unwilling to risk their capital and do not venture unless they feel that their money is not only secure, but also that they can safely depend upon a large share of profit. The capitalists of other countries are more venturesome ; they risk more and, therefore, secure

the first places, while we arrive always second. What can the State do? Can it create this spirit of enterprise where it does not exist? Evidently not. What the State can do when this spirit of enterprise exists is to foster and encourage it in every way. What are the instruments of which the Government disposes? Principally the Consular Service. I have endeavoured to give to this service an essentially modern form; the Consuls are losing always more those attributes which once belonged to them and caused them to be confused with Diplomatic Agents, and are becoming first of all the agents of commercial information and expansion.

One of the measures by which the Government can favour commercial expansion is the improvement of the navigation services, and my colleague of the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs has with great earnestness attended to this side of the question. In the new Maritime Conventions which will be submitted to Parliament noteworthy improvements have been sketched out in the services with the Far East, with Central America, Egypt, Asia Minor, Syria, and with our colonies of Eritrea and the Benadir. The Government, therefore, is neither slow nor unwilling in fostering this movement of commercial expansion. It has already taken steps and will welcome any further suggestion which may be made by Parliament.

Our commercial relations are increasing, and we have concluded, and are negotiating commercial conventions with those smaller States which had so far, unwisely, been neglected.

As to the "*Convention for Ethiopia*" with France and England, I consider that it has been an act of good and sound policy. It is here in the Senate that an important discussion took place when, suddenly, it became known

in Italy that France and England had come to an agreement concerning the Tripolitan hinterland. I remember the bitter reproaches then made to the Government for having ignored this event and for not having participated in the agreement. I believe, therefore, that for the same reason the Government should to-day be praised because an understanding between France and England regarding Ethiopia has not taken place without the participation of Italy, and this is due to the fact that Italy has been diligent in entering early into negotiations with England, so that when England and France made arrangements together for a colonial understanding, they were obliged to take into account the negotiations previously begun with Italy and give her the part which was her due.

Naturally this treaty, like all conventions, must cover the interests of all concerned. All have, therefore, obtained something, and all have, on the other hand, been obliged to grant something. If we have demanded the recognition of our interests, it was only natural that we should recognize the interests of the others.

It has been an act of sound policy, because evidently any dissension which might have taken place between France and England in colonial matters would have had a repercussion upon European politics, and when this should have happened, I believe the country would have called the Government strictly to account. I, therefore, for my part, congratulate myself upon having twice contributed, as Ambassador at London and later as Minister, to the conclusion of this treaty.

## IX. SITTING OF MARCH 15TH, 1907—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

The "*Italo-Anglo-French Convention*" of December 13th, 1906, for Ethiopia—Historical sketch of negotiations and draft of agreement between England and Italy, drawn in 1903 by Mr. Harrington, Sir Rennell Rodd, and Comm. Agnesa—France's participation to negotiations following upon the "*Anglo-French Colonial Agreement*" of April, 1904—Definition of English and Italian interests with reference to the distribution of the waters of the Nile and its affluents—French railway concessions in Ethiopia—The "*Protocols*" of 1891—The conciliatory spirit of Sir Edward Grey and M. Cambon—Value of the "*Convention*" for the three contracting Powers.

General foreign politics were the theme of the exhaustive discussion upon the Budget for Foreign Affairs last December. No time was left for colonial affairs and, except for a few brief and summary remarks at the Senate, the "*Anglo-Italo-French Convention*" for Ethiopia of December 13th, 1906, which I had shortly before communicated to Parliament, passed unnoticed.

But it was natural that it should be exhaustively discussed, and I therefore thank the Hon. de Marinis, Santini and Artom, who, with their interpellations, have given occasion to this debate.

The sphere of influence of the Italian possessions and protectorates in Africa was determined by the "*Anglo-Italian Protocols*" of March 24th and April 15th, 1891, and of May 5th, 1894. Every one knows the contents of those "*Protocols*," which opened up for us a very vast field of action.

Still, since that time, we found an obstacle in France, who from Jibuti and Obok was keeping open the road of penetration towards Harar and the Shoa. Moreover,

painful political and military events supervened, which led to the "*Peace Treaty of Adis-Abeba*" on October 26th, 1896, by which Italy definitely renounced to the "*Uccialli Treaty*" and recognized the absolute sovereignty and independence of the State of Ethiopia.

The evident consequence of these events was the impossibility of applying the Protocols of 1891 and 1894 to those territories in which the Italian Government had officially recognized the sovereignty of another independent State. Still, as these "*Protocols*" constituted a bilateral pact between Italy and England which had never been annulled, they retained their efficacy in the relations between these two nations. And, in fact, upon the basis of those "*Protocols*," boundaries were traced west and south of Eritrea, and a series of partial boundaries have determined locally the final border line between Eritrea and the Sudan. Thus the boundary between Italian and British Somaliland is marked by the line established by the "*Protocol*" of 1891.

Nor is this all. By a Note exchanged between the two Powers in January, 1903, England has pledged herself to proceed in agreement with Italy in the negotiations for the laying down of the remaining Anglo-Ethiopian boundaries and to not bind herself by any agreement which could result prejudicial to Italian interests.

Italy, following upon the recognition of Ethiopian independence, could only direct her efforts towards preventing other Powers from violating the integrity and sovereign rights of Ethiopia and from acquiring absolute predominance in that region.

Serious interests placed France at once in open opposition to England and Italy. French agents had succeeded in obtaining from the Negus, between 1894 and 1896, the concession for a railway line in three sections: from



Jibuti to Harar, from Harar to Antoto, from Antoto to Kaffa and to the White Nile.

In 1902 the French Government intervened by officially granting an annual subsidy of five hundred thousand francs for fifty years upon condition that the concession should pass over to the State. The Negus declared that he had granted it to a private company, that it should remain a private enterprise, and that the railway line to be constructed should have an exclusively commercial character.

Matters were at this stage when there began to be rumours of the possibility of an understanding between England and France. Italy's greatest interest was to participate to this understanding and to not be excluded from it, all the more as other commercial and industrial concessions granted by the Negus upon vast territories tended to exclude the possibility of Italian activity. Nor could we hope to cope advantageously for any length of time with the other Powers, whose action was vigorously supported by private capitalists more courageous and enterprising than the Italian ones. Moreover, Italy was to make sure against the danger of future complications and surprises in the event of the succession to the Ethiopian throne. It was natural, therefore, that the idea of a frank and loyal understanding with England upon the most vital questions concerning the development of our African possessions should take shape.

About the end of 1903, only a short time previous to my assuming the direction of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Harrington, English Minister to Ethiopia, came to Rome, and with the English *Chargé d'Affaires*, Sir Rennell Rodd, and the Head of our Colonial Department, Commendatore Agnesa, drew up and recommended to their respective Governments a draft of agreement upon Ethiopian affairs.

Such an agreement was founded upon the two Powers' common interest in maintaining the integrity of Ethiopia, in establishing a reciprocal guarantee for every possible change in that region, in protecting their interests in the confining territories and in Ethiopia itself. Upon the lines of this draft negotiations were begun in London to change it into a definite agreement, but they proved laborious and lengthy.

In the meantime, while the Italian and English Delegates were in conference at Rome, negotiations had begun at London between France and England for the solution of all the outstanding colonial questions, so that, just when Italy was about to come to an understanding with England, the "*Anglo-French Colonial Agreement*" of April, 1904, which radically changed the relations of the two Powers and was the beginning of the *entente cordiale*, was published.

As a consequence of this new situation, England proposed that the "*Convention for Ethiopia*" should, before being signed, be communicated to France to obtain her consent. The consent of France, with the consequent recognition of French interests, would have been for us as well an element of security for the future, because, after all, Italy would have come in contact with territories under French influence, while England would have come in contact with territories under Italian influence. We therefore consented. France, after having examined the Anglo-Italian proposals, presented some counter-propositions, to which we, in our turn, opposed our observations, proposing modifications. Thus, the discussion was carried on among the three Governments until the end of 1905 without having reached any conclusion.

At that time I left the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. The Hon. di San Giuliano and the Hon. Guicciardini, who

succeeded me, carried on the negotiations, but did not consider they could accept the last French proposals, although England had declared she had nothing to object to them.

I was also asked by them to give my opinion, and declared I was fully of their mind, because, while I believed that the "*Convention*" as a whole would be useful to Italian interests, it seemed to me that in two of the articles they were not sufficiently protected, and that one other article could have caused difficulties with other Powers to arise. Things were at this point when I was sent to London as Ambassador, and I therefore took up again there the negotiations, which I afterwards continued and concluded as Foreign Affairs Minister in June, 1906.

The "*Convention*" has been published and communicated simultaneously to the Italian, English and French Parliaments. I will not, therefore, stop to repeat its text since you all have it before you. A few words will suffice to show that the objections to which, in my mind and also in those of the Hon. di San Giuliano and Guicciardini the draft of the "*Convention*" contemplated at the beginning of 1906 gave rise, can no longer be opposed to the "*Convention*" such as it was definitely agreed upon in June, 1906.

At Article 4, the Hon. Guicciardini was concerned above all by the definition of English interests with regard to the waters of the Nile and its affluents, expressing the fear that by it our interests could have suffered.

But if this fear could appear justified at the stage at which the negotiations had arrived when the Hon. Guicciardini gave up his office, it has no longer any reason to exist in the final stipulation of paragraph (A) of Article 4 of the "*Convention*." This is so evident

that it will be enough for me to simply read that paragraph :

“ The interests of Great Britain and of Egypt in the basin of the Nile and more especially in so far as concerns the regulation of the waters of that river and its affluents, giving due consideration to local interests and to the Italian interests mentioned at paragraph (B) . . . ”

This article is so clear that it is enough to read it to show that it was impossible, while giving due consideration to English interests, to give greater guarantees to the Italian ones in so far as regards the distribution of the waters.

The nature and importance of the interests England wishes to protect in the distribution of the waters are laid down in the official correspondence, and appear clearly outlined in the declarations of the Marquis of Lansdowne. It is not a case of territorial aspirations or demands, but of preventing any alteration in the flow of the waters which pour into the Nile ; and apropos of this it will be well to bear in mind that the “ *Anglo-Ethiopian Agreement* ” of 1902 had already given England every assurance for the Blue Nile, for the Sebat, and for the Tsana. Such an assurance is vital for the very existence of Egypt, and it is shown by the fact that England had it inserted in the “ *Anglo-Italian Protocol* ” of 1891 with regard to the waters of the Atbara.

But, for all the regions adjoining Eritrea, Italian interests, in so far as regards the waters, are protected not only by the very explicit and categorical reservations of the “ *Convention* ” we are now discussing, but also by pre-existing agreements between Italy and England for the Gask and Setit rivers, in which it is said that the flow of the waters is regulated according to the rules of good neighbourhood.

And now let us come to a very important point ; to the definition of Italian interests. In the scheme proposed by France, the paragraph (B) of Article 4 defined Italian interests in all events as follows :—

“(B) The interests of Italy in Ethiopia in relation to Eritrea and Somaliland, including the Benadir, and especially inasmuch as concerns the communications between these possessions. . . .”

Instead, paragraph (B) of Article 4 of the “*Convention*” such as it has been signed, reads as follows :—

“(B) The interests of Italy in Ethiopia in relation to Eritrea and Somaliland, including the Benadir, and more especially inasmuch as concerns the hinterland of these possessions and the territorial union between them west of Adis Abeba. . . .”

Who does not see the enormous difference between the two texts ? In the first one it could well be said that nothing would have been left to us but that fantastic railway which should run from Eritrea to the Benadir, while the second text clearly recognizes the supreme interests which it was above all important for us to protect—and reserves for us in a more or less distant day the share which is due to us and is necessary to assure the future of the two colonies.

Must I insist on this point ? Must I give further explanations ? It would not be advisable on account of the delicacy of the subject, nor would it be respectful towards the Chamber, as I am not holding here an elementary course upon colonial affairs, but am speaking to an Assembly in which sit men who in colonial matters can be my masters. But there are some who, while recognizing that Article 4 of the “*Convention*” resists victoriously to all the objections that have been made against it, still seem to fear that we have conceded too

much to France in the articles concerning the railways. Let us then examine the position created in this respect by the London agreement.

France had secured in 1894 the concession for the railway from Jibuti to the White Nile, and in 1904 she had been invited by Menelik to continue the construction of the railway from Diré Daoua to Adis Abeba. All this would have been retained by France even without the "*Convention*"; the latter has had no other effect but that of stopping her at Adis Abeba, while assuring to her the guarantees of the two Powers for what she had already secured. But on the other hand Italy has obtained that the French railway enterprise should have a private character, that for the whole length of the route covered by the railway there be equality of treatment for all, and that an Italian be among the members of the Administrative Board of the railway.

Nor should the obligation of a previous understanding between the Powers, in the case of other lines which would compete with those constructed by them or which they have a right to construct, cause undue concern, because it was opportunely established that this clause should apply only to those lines which would be in direct competition, therefore solely in a special and well-determined case which it was only fair to contemplate.

It seems to me that the most powerful argument to which the opponents of the "*Convention*" have recourse is that it destroys the situation created for Italy in Ethiopia by the "*Protocols*" of 1891. I have already at the beginning of this speech pointed out the value of these "*Protocols*." In the relations between Italy and England they had simply a negative value, and they had no value at all for France, who had never recognized them, nor would she, according to the general "*Act of Berlin*" of 1885, be obliged

to recognize them. Neither had they any value for Ethiopia, for whom they were non-existent after the treaty by which we had recognized her independence.

When the lines of those "*Protocols*" touch some possession of ours they become boundaries and have already been recognized as such ; but when they touch Ethiopia they have only a virtual value, and in the meanwhile Ethiopia can, in consequence of her sovereign power which we have recognized, grant to whom she chooses every possible concession. Therefore, if we had relied only on those "*Protocols*," we should have exposed our most vital interests to a long expectation which would have ended in a certain delusion.

With the new "*Convention*," instead, we have made sure against any possible surprise and have secured a fair share of the advantages gained by the three Powers. The "*Protocols*" without the "*Convention*" would have been a very frail instrument in our hands, instead of which the "*Convention*" not only recognizes them, but makes them the foundation of the *status quo* in Ethiopia, together with the other agreements which co-existed with them ; and France, who had never recognized them, has by the present "*Convention*" explicitly done so.

The declaration with which Menelik has received the notification of the text of the "*Convention*" by the Representatives of the three Powers before its signature, shows that it has been for us not only useful but necessary. Menelik said he thanked the three Powers for the notification and for the recognition of independence, but that the whole should be held as subject to his sovereign power. Of what use then would the "*Protocols*" have been during the lifetime of Menelik ? What would they have been reduced to and of what good would they have been if we had found ourselves alone to face England and France ?

If we consider what has been done by Italy in Africa from 1882 to 1896, and from 1896 to the present day, it may well be declared that, without engaging the other two Powers into having common interests and advantages with ourselves in Ethiopia, we should hardly have had the possibility of protecting our own interests.

Concluding, Italy had to choose between these two alternatives: to participate in the agreement with France and England, or to act alone, counting upon herself only. In the latter case she would have let Ethiopia be divided, both as to political and commercial influence, between France and England, and would have found herself in the condition of having nothing to offer, everything to ask, and of being unable to obtain anything by her forces alone.

The "*Convention*," like all such agreements, implies the renunciation of something by each of the contracting parties; otherwise it could never have been concluded. I am happy on this occasion to render homage to the conciliatory spirit of Sir Edward Grey and M. Cambon, who in the negotiations with us showed themselves inspired by the earnest desire of coming to an understanding with Italy. Criticisms will certainly not be spared them also, as they were not spared us, and there will not fail to be people who will find that they have too weakly upheld English and French interests as there have been those who have considered we have not strenuously defended the Italian ones; but this will be the best proof that the "*Convention*" is equally advantageous and just for all of the three Powers.

If at the last moment we had refused to sign it, England and France would have done so without us. What would have been said of the Italian Government if such a thing had happened to the damage of our interests



in Ethiopia, of our politics in Europe and of our *prestige* everywhere ?

The men with greatest authority in Parliament would have arisen to severely censure the Government, and I should have heard in this hall those words overflowing with bitterness and anger which were pronounced when in 1899 it became suddenly known that England and France had entered into an agreement for the hinterland of Tripolitania, without holding Italy in any account, without even advising her of it.

It must also not be forgotten that if we had not signed the "*Convention for Ethiopia*," we should never have been able to secure the participation France had always heretofore obstinately refused to the Convention for the repression of contraband of arms in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, upon the rigid application of which depends the future safety of our possessions in Somaliland and in the Benadir ; and this is indeed no small advantage.

Some omissions have been remarked, in so far as Italy is concerned, in the Acts mentioned by Article 1. But these are covered by a special declaration which was signed at London, together with the "*Convention*," by Sir Edward Grey, M. Cambon, and myself, the text of which I have the honour of communicating to the Chamber. Here is the declaration :

" The Italian Foreign Affairs Minister points out that Italy has some treaties with the Sultan of Lugh, the Sultan of Raheita, and the Dankalis regarding frontier questions. As these treaties must form the object of negotiations with the Ethiopian Government, it is impossible to mention them in the enumeration made at Article 1. The Italian Government, however, will communicate them to France and England at the end of the negotiations. The English Foreign Affairs Minister and

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the French Ambassador give notice to the Italian Foreign Minister of the receipt of this declaration."

As this declaration, which gives greater efficiency to the protection of Italian interests, concerned Italy exclusively, it was not published by us with the "*Convention*" of which it is a complement.

The Hon. De Marinis holds as harmful to our interests the mention made among the agreements enumerated in Article 1, of the Treaty of 1862 between France and the Somalis, on account of the value it might have, I imagine, in the future. Now, the Acts enumerated at Article 1 must be considered precisely in relation to those others which are mentioned in the declaration I have just read, and in the special case contemplated by the Hon. De Marinis, the boundary "*Protocols*" of 1900 and 1901 between France and Italy remove every doubt as to the respective rights of the two Powers in the territories between the region owned by the Sultan of Raheita and the French Protectorate of the Somali coast.

The "*Convention*" signed at London opens a new field to us. It will be fruitful or sterile as our action will be assiduous or negligent. But I believe I may affirm that, if we know how to act, we will be able to prepare a political and commercial future for our two colonies.

X. SITTING OF MAY 15TH, 1907—(CHAMBER OF  
DEPUTIES)

The meetings at Rapallo, Athens, and Gaeta—Exchange of views with Prince von Bülow and Sir Charles Hardinge—The system of alliances, friendships, and special *ententes* which characterizes modern international politics—Count von Aehrenthal's visit to Athens—The Hague Conference for the limitation of armaments and the English proposal—Prince von Bülow's and Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman's speeches and the difficulty of finding a practical formula.

After the exhaustive discussion of December last, which gave me occasion to outline in every particular the plan of Italian foreign policy, leaving nothing in the dark, it was only natural that on occasion of the new Budget, which comes before the Chamber at only a few months' distance, that discussion be not renewed. And, truly, a country which at brief intervals should periodically discuss and put in doubt the directive principles of its foreign policy would lose every *prestige* and seriousness.

That continuity in foreign affairs, which I affirmed was now assured to Italian politics and of which I enumerated the advantages, must be found not only in the Government's action but also in the debates of Parliament. I will, therefore, limit myself to-day to a very few remarks bearing upon the new events and new manifestations ; for all else I will refer you to my speech of December last 1906.

The interview at Rapallo, the visit to Athens, the meeting at Gaeta have aroused comments in which, as usual, some people have given a free hand to their winged imagination. But these events must seem natural when one bears in mind my declarations of December last, of which they are the embodiment and confirmation. If

those declarations were received in Italy and abroad with satisfaction and sympathy, why should the events which later have confirmed them cause surprise or create a different impression ?

It is true that some have said that one visit or interview has followed the other as an artful contrivance by which the one was to annul or serve as a counteraction to the other, and those who hold this opinion have taken occasion from it to offer the usual criticisms of Italian policy, which, to their minds, proceeds uncertainly, waveringly, and by zig-zags.

But this way of considering these events is not only vulgar and childish, but manifestly contrary to truth. No one has ever thought of such a thing. A policy which should embroil itself in such subtleties would be then and there condemned, nor has it ever crossed my mind to put it into practice. Between Rapallo, Athens, and Gaeta there is no contrast or contradiction, but harmony. They are names and dates which do not conflict but complete each other and summarize a dignified policy of peace which has been practised by Italy in full daylight, with great frankness, great sincerity, great loyalty. It is not an uncertain policy, nor one proceeding by zig-zags, but a clear and well-defined one which goes forward with confidence along a straight and wide road and which has so far been crowned with success, notwithstanding the sinister predictions of the prophets of catastrophe and international cataclysm. The impulsive and nervous comments of some foreign paper, following upon the meeting at Gaeta, seemed for a moment to give ground for a fresh attack which would have been made upon me in this Chamber by those political men who on other occasions charged me with the alleged incompatibility between our alliance with Germany and our friendship with England.

But the efficacious and authoritative words of Prince von Bülow came in good time, and were so clear and open that one may well say they have removed for ever any fear or doubt. They summarize what had already resulted from my interviews at Rapallo with Prince von Bülow and at Gaeta with Sir Charles Hardinge, that is to say, that Germany and England wish to constantly improve their relations and solve amicably whatever conflict of interests might arise between them, and that Italy can well remain faithful to the alliance with the one without failing in her friendship for the other, without arousing in either anxiety or suspicion.

Prince von Bülow was at Rapallo our welcome guest. In him the Italian nation gladly greeted the Representative of an allied nation to which she is united by so many ties. And the Italian nation was glad of the meeting at Gaeta between the King of England and the King of Italy, and turned her thoughts with sympathy towards the British nation, since so many years her friend, and with gratitude towards King Edward, who, receiving recently in London the Duke of Abruzzi, had spoken in affectionate terms of Italy and of the Savoy Dynasty.

Therefore the ancient formula : “ *Unshakable fidelity to the Triple Alliance, sincere friendship for England and France, and cordial relations with all the other Powers,* ” is always the exponent of our policy, and the straightforward manner in which it is practised by Italy is the only one possible.

It is true that in this country from time to time a voice is raised to condemn this policy, but they are isolated voices and come from two kinds of critics ; from some who are opposed to the Triple Alliance, and, therefore, have recourse to the most futile pretexts to endeavour to place it in a bad light in the eyes of public opinion, and by others

who want one knows not what. But the criticisms of both these classes of people are destroyed by two decisive facts. The first, that all the Powers adopt this system of alliances, friendships and special *ententes*—which is not an Italian invention, but the characteristic aspect of modern international politics; the second, that our policy is appreciated both by our allies and by our friends. Therefore, the discordant note of a section of irresponsibles in Italy and abroad does not mar the harmony of intention and action of those who have the responsibility of Government.

Shortly, Count von Aehrenthal will come to Italy to confirm how much importance he attaches to the relations between Austria-Hungary and Italy, which, I am glad to state, have been becoming ever more intimate and cordial and are at present truly excellent. And also the public opinion of the two countries has come to appreciate even more the advantages of the intimacy and cordiality of these relations. No contradicting voice has been raised in this Chamber, where this time in the discussion of the Budget for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Members have not even assisted to the courteous oratorical contest between the Hon. Barzilai and myself, which they had become accustomed to expect. But if the Hon. Barzilai has not spoken upon the Budget for Foreign Affairs, he has made an incursion into the field of international politics while discussing an interrogation of his upon domestic affairs.

To lessen the friendly significance of Count von Aehrenthal's visit, he has tried to show a deliberate intention in the latter of avoiding the Italian capital and with it the recognition of Italian unity. But why should Count von Aehrenthal think of avoiding the capital of Italy when the Austrian Archduke, who has come

repeatedly and officially to Rome, in circumstances sometimes glad, sometimes sorrowful for us, did not think of doing so ?

What reason is there to doubt of the intentions of Count von Aehrenthal, who has spoken officially of Italy in terms so warm and sincere, only because he will come to Racconigi, when no one thought of doubting those of Count Goluchowski when he came to Monza and Venice ?

I must also express my great surprise and astonishment for having heard the Hon. Barzilai make of this nothing less than a question of the recognition of the unity of Italy with Rome as its capital. These are indeed big words ! But what ? Has there not been this explicit recognition on the part of Austria ? Is it not one of the essential facts upon which rests the treaty of alliance ? Has not Austria-Hungary an Ambassador at the court of the King of Italy ? How can it be supposed that solemn official acts are nothing but mental reservations ? And would not such a supposition be odious and offensive both for the Austro-Hungarian Government, whose loyalty would be questioned, and for the Italian Government, whose dignity would be equally put in doubt ?

All this is so absurd that it is unworthy of being dwelt upon. But I must add one consideration. There are some people who seem to believe that Italy's national right upon her Eternal Capital needs to be confirmed from time to time by some foreign intervention. Well, now, I feel in a totally different manner. I feel it has been wrong to induce in public opinion the habit of noting a difference between Rome and other parts of Italy. I feel that if in Rome is all Italy, in every portion of Italy Rome is present. I feel that Italy's national right to her capital is unprescriptable and absolute, and that the presence in Rome of foreigners, be they ever so illustrious, can add

nothing, in the same way that their absence from Rome can take nothing from it. Moreover, no one contests or threatens this right, and if ever it were to be contested or threatened we can affirm with pride that the whole of Italy would arise to defend it and would know how to do so.

A few words now concerning the King of Italy's visit to Athens. It was natural that our Sovereign should return the King of Greece's visit; it was natural that, like the King of Greece in Rome, our King should receive at Athens the glad welcome which will ever be remembered by all those who had the honour of accompanying him; it was natural that those feelings of sympathy arising from classical affinities among the Greek and Italian people—which the strange and wholly unfounded suppositions as to possible Italian territorial aspirations in the Island of Crete or the Balkan Peninsula had momentarily disturbed—should be revived. But this does not mean that Italian policy in the European East is changed. Its eminently disinterested and peaceful character is founded upon the integrity of the Ottoman Empire and upon the complete agreement with Austria-Hungary, Russia and all the other Powers who signed the "*Treaty of Berlin*." Italian policy views with equal sympathy the various Balkan States and wishes their prosperity and progress. It has seen with great regret that those States have not realized enough that their interests would find greater protection in the sympathy of civilized Europe than in the atrocities of the bands, which are a shame and outrage to humanity, and it has seen with equal regret the renewal of the dissension between Greece and Roumania and the embittered relations between Bulgaria and Servia and Bulgaria and Greece. Italian policy hopes that the Christian nations of the Balkans may end by understanding that they have nothing to gain from the



fratricidal struggles which tear them to pieces, from the war of extermination they wage against each other, and invokes for them an inspiration of peace and concord, and in favour of such peace and concord Italy is ever ready to unfold her action.

Let us now come to the Hague Conference. The English initiative for the discussion at the Hague Conference of the limitation of armaments is for the present only a repetition of the Russian initiative of 1898, that is to say, the general affirmation of the opportunity of such a limitation. If the Russian initiative did not raise anxieties and was considered with equanimity, why should to-day the English proposal give rise to alarm, as though from it, contrary to its intentions, were to come forth a dangerous conflict among the Powers ?

In 1898 the Russian initiative had no results, because it proved impossible to find a practical formula which could be acceptable to all. Well, the question presents itself to-day in the identical terms, nor does the English Government fail to realize it. The English Government denies in the most absolute manner that its proposal could for any reason give occasion to a conflict among the Powers. It has not yet adopted a concrete formula to submit to the Conference, but, in case its proposal, whatever it may be, should not be considered acceptable by all the Great Powers, it will have no effect and the solution of the question will be postponed without there being any cause for conflict, friction, or resentment.

This is the point of view of the English Government, and no one can fail to find it prudent and wise. Therefore, those who have spoken of an embarrassing position for Italy show they have an absolutely fantastic conception of the Hague Conference.

But is it possible to find a practical formula capable

of assuring the limitation of armaments without harming the interests of any State, without placing any in a condition of inferiority, so that all may agree to this formula? Germany and Austria-Hungary have declared they do not believe in such a possibility and will not take part in the discussion, so as to enter into no engagement and to preserve the fullest liberty of action.

This point of view was authoritatively and clearly illustrated by Prince von Bülow in his last speech at the Reichstag, in which he showed how his present conviction that it is not just now possible to find a formula of limitation of armaments to which all could consent, does not mean at all that Germany and the other States who share her opinion have any less at heart the cause of peace.

It is well to remark at this point, therefore, how much the last declarations of Prince von Bülow and Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman have attenuated the contrast which seemed to exist between the English and German points of view. Prince von Bülow, in his speech at the Reichstag, while declaring that the German Delegates would not have taken part in the discussion, hastened to add that, if from the latter were to spring a concrete, serious and practical proposal, the German Government would be ready to conscientiously examine if it really answered to the general interests of peace and to the special interests of the German Empire.

Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, speaking at the banquet of the Liberal Federation in Manchester, after having expressed his appreciation of the frank and friendly tone used by Prince von Bülow, has recognized that probably, even were Germany to take part in the discussion, it would be impossible to find a formula acceptable to all, but he hoped, more than immediate consequences, that his initiative might be fruitful in the future.

Well, these two speeches have brought much nearer together the German Chancellor and the English Premier. Perhaps, indeed, Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman has said the last word upon the question, because I truly believe that all are of opinion that it holds one of those difficult problems, the solution of which is left to the future.

Nor do the declarations made by me on other occasions to the Chamber differ substantially from the present ones. In May and June, 1906, Sir Edward Grey in the House of Commons, and Lord Fitzmaurice in the House of Lords, had eloquently expressed the aspiration towards a limitation of the armaments which weigh heavily upon the Budgets of all the States, but had not announced any concrete proposal for the realization of this aspiration. I greeted it with applause, and declared that we should take part in the Hague Conference, inspired by the same sentiments. I did not fail, however, to make clear and explicit reserves as to the possibility of finding a practical formula acceptable to all. Well, I still to-day second the very noble intentions which have prompted the generous English initiative, and I maintain at the same time the reserves as to the possibility of putting it immediately into practice. In this much I fully agree with those made by Germany and Austria-Hungary.

Between Prince von Bülow's, Count von Aehrenthal's point of view and mine there is no substantial difference. The only difference is as to the course to be followed. *They* prefer to take no part in the discussion and to await its results ; to examine and value them with complete liberty. *I* believe that Italy can take part in the discussion while reserving for herself the same liberty of examination and judgment as to the results of the discussion itself. Must one from this slight difference of method infer that the perfect agreement between the

States of the Triple Alliance is shaken? Not by any means. In the exchange of ideas which has taken place between Prince von Bülow, Count von Aehrenthal, and myself they, having ascertained the substantial identity of views existing between us, have recognized that Italy could well follow as to the discussion the course which she thought most suitable. Therefore, those who would wish to subtilize upon this subject in order to point out the existence of imaginary dissensions are warned that their efforts are vain.

It appears to the Hon. Romussi that I have contradicted myself, and, by the tone of the interpellation presented by the Hon. Brunialti, it seems he is of the same opinion. But I can reject such an accusation as unjust. If there is any contradiction it lies in the nature of the question, it arises from the difficulties which face all of those who try to solve the intricate problem, it springs from the disproportion between the greatness of the peaceful aspirations and the scarce efficacy of the means of embodying them. If I had fallen into contradiction so would have President Roosevelt in his message to the American Congress, in his address to the peacemakers assembled through the initiative of Mr. Carnegie, and in his speech of inauguration at the Jamestown Exhibition. Equally in contradiction, I might say, would be all those who have given their attention to this subject with the earnest desire of harmonizing high idealistic aspirations with serious practical difficulties. But also the Hon. Romussi and Brunialti would be in contradiction. And, truly, the only concrete proposal which has so far been hinted at, that of a consolidation of the armaments of all the States, would encounter their opposition. In fact, the Hon. Romussi, notwithstanding his peacemaking, asks in his paper that we provide for the

fortification of our undefended frontier, and the Hon. Brunialti, in his last speech upon the Budget of War, affirmed that no one can think that Italy should reduce her armaments so long as she shall be in a condition of inferiority with respect to other Powers with whom she might eventually find herself in conflict.

With this I have ended. Hon. Members, I believe that the plan of our foreign policy which I traced in December and have now completed, is worthy of a nation like Italy. Before the two branches of Parliament have already been discussed, or are soon to be taken up, several Bills: that for the reorganization of the careers in the Foreign Office, which will give the Government a more efficient instrument of action in the Diplomatic and Consular Service, the latter of which gains ever greater importance through the prevailingly commercial character of international politics; that for the modification of the Emigration Law, which tends on the one hand to perfect the system of protection of our emigrants and on the other to eliminate the artificial encouragements to emigration which are still in our laws or come from the not sufficiently repressed action of speculators; that for the administrative, judiciary and military organization of the colony of the Benadir, which tends to take that colony from the present provisional and disordered state to lead it to a gradual and sure progress; and finally the agreement with England for Northern Somaliland, which it is time to provide for, has also been communicated to you.

Thus the general lines of our policy are embodied in useful and timely administrative provisions. These show you the Government's active interest, these, better than any rhetorical conclusion, summarize my programme, to which I hope you will grant your approbation.

XI. SITTING OF MARCH 11TH, 1908—(CHAMBER OF  
DEPUTIES)

Italy's relations with Austria—The meetings of Desio and Semmering, and the Uvac-Mitrovitza Railway—The interests of the two countries in the Balkan Peninsula—Attitude of the Powers in the question of the Balkan Railways—Italy's interest in the Adriatic-Danubian Railway—The Macedonian Reforms and the reorganization of the *Gendarmerie*.

To-day the moment has come in which the question raised by the Hon. Barzilai in his motion may be unreservedly discussed, for we have all the elements necessary to treat it exhaustively. Let us then discuss it with the same frankness which has been used by the Hon. Barzilai and the other speakers who have touched upon this question.

The Hon. Barzilai has been temperate and prudent. Among the things he has said there are some in which I willingly agree with him. But it seems to me that in one part of his speech he has tried to prove what in a previous interview he had termed, with a stronger phrase than those used in Parliament, "*the failure of my policy with regard to Austria*," a failure which would be all the more painful after the meetings of Desio and Semmering, which would remain as an ironical and bitter memory.

Failure of my policy? If it were of *my* policy alone perhaps the ill might be remedied, although in foreign affairs it is always much more difficult than in domestic ones to remedy the errors which have been committed, and there are those who from painful experiences draw the reflection that in foreign policy errors are always expiated, and that at times the expiation lasts very long.

The failure, therefore, would not be of *my* policy

alone, but of *Italian* policy, for the one we are now unfolding is the only policy that Italy can and should follow, and this is not my opinion only, but that of many noted men who have been in the Government and might return there any day. But let us see in effect how matters stand.

The memory of Desio and Semmering is not bitter, but is, on the contrary, a very pleasing one both for Count von Aehrenthal and myself, and I cordially reciprocate my Austro-Hungarian colleague's courteous and friendly expressions bearing upon our meeting, and pronounced by him at the Delegations. At Desio and Semmering we discussed in all their particulars the political questions which are connected with the Balkan problem, and the similarity of views which resulted from our conversations was embodied in two official *communiqués* which we drew up together.

As to the economic and commercial action, however, there was no discussion of details, it was only agreed upon general lines that each State would have unfolded its own with complete independence, but without trying to harm the action of the other, and it was deemed advisable to warn our respective Consuls in the East to lay down any thought of rivalry, which would not have been consistent with the relations of alliance and friendship which unite the two States.

Therefore, the question of the Mitrovitza Railway, which belonged to the sphere of economic action, was not discussed. The Hon. Barzilai holds this railway to be the exponent of a political action as well. I will speak of this later on, but will say now that, before Count von Aehrenthal pronounced his speech at the Delegations, I was advised of his intention of asking the Sublime Porte for the construction of the Uvac-Mitrovitza Railway. Could I and should I have opposed it? I could certainly

not have done so with any justice, as Section 25 of the "*Berlin Treaty*" undoubtedly recognizes Austria's right, and it is useless to sophisticate upon a few words of that article to try and reach a different conclusion. This right has been, moreover, explicitly recognized by Germany and England, nor has it been opposed by the other Powers.

It is true that, while admitting this right, the expediency of exercising it, at a time when the dispute upon the Macedonian Reforms is the hottest, has been seriously questioned in several quarters and more particularly by Sir Edward Grey and Lord Fitzmaurice from the English Parliamentary tribune, but I will return later to this point. In the meanwhile, I wish to affirm that, even if Article 25 of the "*Berlin Treaty*" had not existed, even if it could have been differently interpreted, I could never have opposed the construction of the Mitrovitzka Railway.

It is not in the Twentieth Century that it would be possible to impose upon a State to renounce the means of communication with bordering States, or to erect upon its frontiers a new *Chinese Wall* to repulse and smother the free expansion of its economic and commercial activities. Who could at the present day undertake to make civilization go backwards? Who would lightly assume the responsibility of bringing about a war by proclaiming this principle?

Here I must dispel an erroneous impression, which the Hon. Barzilai has not explicitly manifested, but which is felt in all his speeches as well as sometimes in the remarks made in some quarters regarding our policy towards Austria-Hungary. This impression is that all those things which benefit Austria-Hungary must for this reason alone be harmful to us; in the same manner there are some people in Austria-Hungary who think that everything



that is of benefit to Italy must necessarily be harmful to the Dual Monarchy. Fortunately, those who, both in Italy and Austria-Hungary, are under this impression are a small minority, and the present discussion—like that which took place at the Austrian and Hungarian Delegations—is the best proof of it, as what has resulted from both discussions has been the possibility, the usefulness, the necessity of friendship and concord between the two countries.

Now, the policy followed by Count von Aehrenthal and myself has been and will constantly be a policy of reaction against that fantastic and dangerous impression which would place Austria-Hungary and Italy one against the other, like Carthage against Rome, as if the greatness of the one could only be founded upon the humiliation of the other.

No, this is not and cannot be. The interests of the two countries allow an equitable and harmonious solution, and the efforts of their statesmen towards this end will not be fruitless.

There is room in the Balkan Peninsula for the legitimate interests of Austria-Hungary and of Italy, and I had occasion to show to the Chamber—therefore will not repeat it now—how the stipulations of the Triple Alliance regarding Macedonia and the special agreement regarding Albania protect the interests of both. There is equally room in the Balkan Peninsula for the legitimate interests of all civilized nations as well as first of all for those of the Balkan States.

On more than one occasion Austria-Hungary has taken into account our interests. Count von Aehrenthal has already recalled at the Delegations how Austria has looked with friendliness upon the construction of the port of Antivari, of the Antivari-Vir-Bazar Railway and the

concession for the navigation of the Skutari Lake, all of which are entrusted to Italian capital. We could not, therefore, reasonably question Austria-Hungary's right to construct the Mitrovitza Railway ; one thing only could we have opposed—had she demanded it—and that is the railway monopoly ; one thing only could we reasonably demand, that, just as she wished to construct the railway which most benefited her own commerce, Italy, with the other Powers and the Balkan States, should be free to construct those railways which they held to be most apt to benefit and intensify their own commerce.

Upon this point Austria-Hungary declared to agree with us. Moreover, we had already agreed with Russia, and upon this basis it was easy to come to an understanding. The Russian Government, (with which, in spite of and against every hostile or threatening attitude of individuals or parties, I have assiduously cultivated relations which, already good, have now become excellent), has summarized the happy solution in a circular which has our full consent, because it perfectly expresses our ideas. And, truly, to render my thoughts I could say nothing more and nothing different.

Three things are pointed out by the Russian Note :

(1) The declaration of the Vienna Cabinet that the railway between Bosnia and Mitrovitza has an exclusively commercial scope, that of facilitating communications ;

(2) That the construction of another railway opening a free outlet to the seas which border the Balkan Peninsula will facilitate its peaceful development ;

(3) That it is easy to conciliate the different interests by supporting the other railway projects presented by the Balkan States ;

Practically, therefore, the effects of the Russian Note

would be to recognize Austria-Hungary's right to demand the construction of the Uvac Mitrovitzka Railway and to support the railway demanded by Servia for Nisch and St. John of Medua or any other place adapted for the purpose, taking, however, in due account also the outlet at Antivari justly demanded by Montenegro ; to support equally the Kustendil-Kumanovo Railway demanded by Bulgaria, the one from Larissa to Salonika demanded by Greece, and the one from Monastir to Valona, which is also in project and in the construction of which Italy would certainly be interested.

Evidently, to accept this programme other elements are needed : States who must grant subsidies, capitalists who must furnish the money, (and among these Italian capital should certainly have an important part), and, finally, Turkey's consent. But each day has its task : to-day let us deal with the first stage of the question, of the agreement among the Powers, the rest will have to follow.

I have already spoken of Austria-Hungary's, Italy's, and Russia's attitude. France, who has also had with us a friendly exchange of views, declares she conforms herself to this attitude. As to England, while being in favour of the construction of those railways which are apt to promote the welfare of the Balkan populations, she has assumed for the present a neutral attitude, because she fears that the question of the railways suddenly brought up should cause the reforms to pass in second line, and the latter, to her mind, are, and must remain always, the principal issue. How can we dispel this fear expressed by Sir Edward Grey in his last speech ? I will try presently to answer this question.

As to Germany, I think it will be well to quote the words pronounced by the German Ambassador, Count

Wolff-Metternich, at the banquet of the London Chamber of Commerce, because they answer perfectly what was declared to me in the name of Prince von Bülow by Ambassador Count Monts, because they fully confirm our point of view, and, finally, because they show how far from true is the rash affirmation that the Balkan Railways had strained the relations between Italy and Germany and rendered difficult Italy's position in the Triple Alliance.

Count Metternich expressed himself thus :

“ It is a gratuitous invention that Germany has instigated Austria-Hungary to construct the Mitrovitzka Railway. The German Government, however, has no reason whatever for not viewing with favour the railway project to which her ally and friend is empowered by treaty. All the railways in Turkey will be welcomed by Germany as a means of pacification, of development of commerce and exchanges, of resurrection to conditions more in harmony with civilization for those unfortunate regions.”

Here, therefore, is the question which for a moment seemed to darken the European horizon safely on the road towards an equitable solution in which Italian interests are adequately protected. With Bulgaria, Servia, and Roumania we have recently concluded treaties of commerce ; the railway, which from the Adriatic coast will place us in direct communication with those countries, will give a fresh and vigorous impulse to our exportation ; in a short time we will see our exchanges notably increased and the importance of the ports of Venice, Ancona, Bari, and Brindisi greatly enhanced.

It is true that the same people who would have decried our inefficiency if we had failed to place the Adriatic-Danubian Railway in the first line would now like to lessen its importance. But I remember that in 1901,

after the Emperor of Austria in his speech at the opening of the Reichsrath had officially announced the project for the Mitrovitza Railway, Loiseau, in a noteworthy article in the "*Revue de Paris*," showed its very great importance for Austria-Hungary and for Germany, and pointed out at the same time the equal importance which the Adriatic to the Danube Railway would have for the Slav and Latin States, among which in first line Italy. And he concluded thus :

"In these two lines which cross each other is held the symbolic and mathematical solution of the problem. Which will be constructed first? Which will take the first place?"

I also remember that, ever since 1901, the great importance of the Adriatic-Danubian Railway was proclaimed in this Chamber and that, in the discussion which took place in June of that year upon the Budget for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Luzzatti and Guicciardini gave this question special prominence. I will seek an even more conclusive testimony among the most decided opponents of my policy and will mention two books of polemics and propaganda published in these latter years, in both of which, (except for the form, which in the one is courteous towards me, while the other is not so at all), my policy of friendship with Austria-Hungary is equally criticized and condemned.

Well, both of them extol the importance of this railway line from the Danube to the Adriatic. One of them speaking of it says :

"Italy would thus have at a short distance from her coasts the means of raising the fortunes of her great Adriatic ports, and, through Venice, the great Lombard industrial emporium, would find an important and near market in such conditions as to be able to compete with

Austro-German commerce, which now overflows those markets with the lines from Vienna, Belgrade, and Nisch, and which will monopolize still more those regions with the Serajevo-Mitrovitza-Uskub line, if no one arises to compete with it upon the same field."

And the other, having repeated more or less the same arguments in favour of the Danubian-Adriatic Railway, adds :

"The big difficulties for the carrying out of such a project are principally two ; the action of Austria and that of the Sultan. The first one more difficult to overcome than the second."

Well, what appeared to my opponents as the most difficult obstacle has been overcome, and, if this does not satisfy them, one must say they are indeed hard to please !

Is it necessary for me to reply to the objection made in some quarters that the railway from the Adriatic to the Danube opens the Adriatic to the Slavs ? But what does this phrase, which to me appears wholly devoid of sense, mean ?

It would almost seem as if a renewal of the migrations of the ancient hordes were feared, by which the Slavs, descending upon the Adriatic coasts, should drive from them the Albanians to take their place. Certainly the railway will benefit the Slav states, their commerce with other States and principally with Italy. But do not the Powers to whom Italy has associated herself aim at the well-being of the Slavs, the Greeks, the Roumanians ; and of all the nationalities which crowd the Balkan Peninsula ? One thing alone we do regret—their bloody strife ; one thing alone we do sincerely and ardently desire—their improvement and progress.

Then, before leaving the question of the Railways to

come to the Reforms, let me say a word upon the connection between the one and the other, especially with regard to the English objection that the Railways cannot be obtained but at the expense of the Reforms.

If each Power were to concentrate its action in favour of the railway in which it has the greatest interest, and were to present itself to Turkey under the aspect of a postulant and, explicitly or implicitly, should let Turkey understand or hope that this particular railway concession could be a kind of offset which would render that Power lukewarm or indifferent for the cause of reform, then certainly the English fears would be justified, the cause of reform compromised, the European Concert would be virtually dissolved, and Sir Edward Grey's warning that the dissolution of the European Concert might lead to war should cause serious anxiety.

But, to my mind, this may be easily avoided if the Powers will agree to place the question on a new ground, that is to say, by considering the railways as a powerful factor of progress, an essential part of the programme of Macedonian Reform, and by giving, not the support of one or more Powers singly to each single railway, but by giving to all the railways, (inasmuch as is judged useful and possible), the collective support of the European Concert.

The European Concert ! In 1903, when I was for the first time appointed to this office, it seemed to have lost all favour. It was called a slow, heavy, and cumbrous piece of machinery, difficult to move and put in action. But from my very first speeches in this Chamber I insisted upon the necessity of at all costs keeping the Macedonian question upon the ground of the European Concert.

Well, events have shown I was not wrong, because they have unfolded themselves so as to strengthen it even

more, especially in the organization of the *Gendarmerie*, in the control of the International Financial Commission and, finally, in the fundamental principles of that plan of Judiciary Reform, which for the present still awaits execution.

The momentary pause which has taken place in the action of the Powers concerning the Reforms has caused it to be said in some quarters that the European Concert was going through a dangerous crisis. But the very fact of the commotion caused in Europe by the suspicion, even though unfounded, that there could be in Macedonia an isolated or privileged action by a single Power, shows that the European Concert is more vital than ever, and that, if its action may have been for a time suspended, it is by no means paralysed or weakened. Moreover, the equal right in Balkan affairs of all the Powers who signed the "*Berlin Treaty*" and the necessity of the European Concert as a guarantee of peace in Europe and of progress in Macedonia, were recognized by Austria-Hungary, reaffirmed by Russia, and proclaimed at the same time by Germany in the communications with regard to the railways which her Ambassadors made to the Powers, and by England from her Parliamentary tribune.

Italy, who is opposed to any monopoly in the Balkans, remains faithful to the European Concert, because it is what answers best to her interests, her principles, her traditions.

Coming to the Reforms, I do not think it wise to publicly express my thought with regard to those which are still the object of negotiations and examination, or may become so in the future, having been for the present only announced, and this in the interest of the cause of reform itself. One thing only I may say, and it is that Italy will specially favour those reforms which will



efficiently end the fratricidal war of the bands that is fought in Macedonia, to the prejudice and shame of the Christian populations, and which is a grievous offence to civilization.

Having said this much, I will dwell briefly upon the two reforms which have already been put into execution, that of the *Gendarmerie*, at the head of which is an Italian General, and that of the control by the Financial Commission, in which we are represented, together with the other Powers who signed the "*Berlin Treaty*."

The reorganization of the *Gendarmerie* has unfolded itself by two stages: 1. The thorough moral and intellectual improvement of the *personnel*; 2. the carrying out of the service upon the basis of the new regulations approved by the Sultan before the arrival in Macedonia of General De Giorgis and the officers entrusted with the reorganization.

In the beginning the Ottoman authorities gave willing and efficient assistance, but, as time went on, things changed; the civil authorities began to find in the new *Gendarmerie* an unwelcome and unpleasant control to their actions, and the military authorities placed obstacles in the way of recruiting and of the passing over to the *Gendarmerie* of men who were good elements in the Army. This threatens to wreck the reform. Of an effective force of 5742 *Gendarmes*, 1074 men are lacking, and, if some provision is not made in time, this deficiency will go on constantly increasing. The Turkish Government, who at the present moment withdraws from its Army 9600 men to employ them in a police service which they ill perform, should facilitate the recruiting of the thousand men who are still needed by the *Gendarmerie*, where their service would prove more efficient. Now, while leaving the question of an increase of the force in abeyance for the

present, it would be necessary that the Powers should first agree to demand that the actual effective force be completed. Nevertheless, some results have been obtained, and both the Christian and Mussulman populations show the greatest sympathy and confidence in the *Gendarmerie*. What is necessary is that these promising beginnings should not remain fruitless and that the Powers should not forsake the work they have begun.

As to General De Giorgis and the other Italian and foreign officers, I have already had occasion to say that their work is above every possible praise. I can now only confirm this gratifying appreciation.

As to the Financial Commission, it would certainly have obtained greater results if it had had fuller discretionary powers and had not been limited to the mere controlling of figures. Still, the results obtained, if considered from a technical point of view, are certainly appreciable. It may be affirmed without hesitation that if the Commission had not intervened, the civil services would have been entirely sacrificed to the military ones. It is, therefore, no small benefit for the three Macedonian Vilayets that an accurately examined and discussed Budget should take into account the exigencies of each service, fixing the amount necessary for each; an amount which cannot be altered during the whole period contemplated by that particular Budget without the Commission's consent. Moreover, the Commission oversees that the sums agreed upon be in effect expended for the purpose to which they have been assigned; it has obtained the suppression or mitigation of the greater number of abuses in the collection of the taxes, and has undertaken the study of the complex and thorny question of the collection of the dimes.

Unfortunately, so far, the Judiciary Reform has not

contributed in any way to the pacification of the country, and it is doubtful if in the future it may do more in this field.

The work of pacification and reform remains then the task and duty of civilized Europe, to which Italy will willingly bring her contribution.

The Hon. Barzilai has ended with a double appeal to me in favour of armaments and in favour of peace, and I receive both and acknowledge that the two things do not exclude, but complete each other. Still, with regard to his having reminded their responsibilities to those who forget them, I will tell him I have never failed to affirm the necessity of a strong Army, and will not tire of repeating this affirmation. It may not have been necessary to make this declaration, because I firmly believe that in pronouncing those words the Hon. Barzilai has, above all, meant to warn those among the colleagues who sit around him, who unwisely believe themselves to be working in favour of progress by endeavouring to extinguish the military spirit of the nation.

As to peace, the Hon. Barzilai's recommendations are superfluous. Our policy is essentially for peace.

I recall I was in London when Lord Beaconsfield returned from the "*Berlin Congress*," and in the streets the great placards with "*Welcome*" were alternated with others bearing the inscription, "*Peace with honour!*" I do not know if the Italian Plenipotentiaries at the "*Congress*" would have had a right to similar inscriptions in Italy, nor do I wish to inquire into the subject. I do know, however, that "*Peace with honour*" is truly to-day the aspect and character of our international politics.

XII. SITTINGS OF JUNE 4TH AND 5TH, 1908—  
(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

The Macedonian Reforms and the Balkan Railways—Italy's relations with Turkey—The Italian Post-Offices in Turkey and the mobilization of the Italian fleet—What Italy demands from Turkey—Ottoman attitude towards Italians in Tripolitania—The question of the Heraclea Mines—Italo-French relations apropos of the protection of Religious Institutions—The German Emperor's and Prince von Bülow's visit to Italy—The Jubilee of the Austrian Emperor.

My declarations will regard three questions which chiefly interest public opinion, that is to say, the Macedonian Reforms, the Balkan Railways, and our relations with Turkey.

In my speech of March 11th apropos of the Macedonian Reforms, I affirmed the necessity of maintaining firm and united the European Concert, of increasing the powers of the Financial Commission, and the action of the *Gendarmerie*. Consequently, as soon as the new proposals drawn up by Russia and completely answering to the ideas I had expressed were communicated to us, Italy was the first, together with Austria-Hungary, to give those proposals her full and unconditional approval.

England had presented some more radical proposals upon which it had not been possible for all the Powers to agree. Therefore, negotiations were opened between England and Russia to endeavour to reach the elaboration of a common project. England has in these days presented her new proposals. Upon the greater number of essential points the agreement may be said to be complete, but there is still some difference of opinion upon minor issues. Everything lets us foresee, however, that soon a complete understanding may be reached and it is not improbable

that this may come forth from the meeting of Reval. For our part we earnestly hope that the English humanitarian ideals and the practical intent of Russia may meet upon common ground and towards this end we have directed our efforts.

Those who vainly labour to discover hesitancy and contradiction in our policy have endeavoured to show that Italy's attitude on the Macedonian question has been displeasing to England. But this does not answer to the truth, and I can well say that the traditional friendship between the two countries is not weakened and that their relations are always marked by the greatest confidence and cordiality. To realize this, moreover, it is sufficient to observe that the attitude of France with respect to the Russian and English proposals is similar to ours and it does not follow in any way that the *entente* between England and France has suffered.

Death met General De Giorgis, who had honoured the Italian name by directing with dignity and competency the Macedonian *Gendarmerie*, and universal homage was rendered him. All the Powers agreed that his successor should be an Italian General, and, even before they had expressed this thought, the Sultan made a formal request to this effect to the King of Italy. I am sure that General Di Robilant, whose appointment was so favourably welcomed, will soon know how to deserve the high consideration which surrounded his predecessor.

With regard to the Balkan Railways, I had expressed the idea that they be included in the plan of reform, to avoid that, on account of a separate and contradictory attitude of the Powers, the European Concert should lose its unity of action and purpose. Mr. Isvolski, in his noteworthy speech at the Duma, which showed the complete identity of the Russian and Italian programme in the

European East, mentioned with approval this idea of mine. The events, however, have unfolded themselves so satisfactorily as to make its enactment, at least for the present, superfluous.

Those disagreements which it was foreseen in some quarters would have arisen among the Powers have not taken place. Germany has kept the ground upon which she had from the beginning found herself in agreement with Italy; she has advised the Porte to not oppose any railway, for they all contribute to the prosperity of the Ottoman Empire, and has especially urged it to consent to the study of the plans for the Adriatic-Danubian Railway, as it has already consented to those for the Uvac-Mitrovitza line.

As to England, already since March 16th, after my speech, Sir Edward Grey expressed himself to our *Chargé d'Affaires* in the following terms :

“ My policy does not differ at all from that of Signor Tittoni. I have no objection to the idea that railways and reforms should proceed hand in hand, if possible. What I do not want is railways without reforms.”

And, in fact, Sir Edward Grey has subsequently declared that, as soon as the plan of the reforms shall have been decided upon, he will insist with the Turkish Government to the effect that the same facilities of the Uvac-Mitrovitza Railway be extended to all the other Balkan Railways, among which the whole line from the Danube to the Adriatic.

I have already said in my last speech that Austria raised no objection to the Adriatic-Danubian Railway, but, since then, in consequence also of the constant exchange of views between us which has an intimate and sincerely friendly character, her action has become always more favourable to us. On April 8th Count von

Aehrenthal declared he found it very natural that Italian capital should have an important part in the construction of the Adriatic-Danubian Railway. On May 13th he informed us that the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Constantinople had declared to the Sublime Porte that the Government considered with sympathy all the Balkan Railways, and, therefore, supported not only the lines demanded by Bulgaria and Greece, but also Serbia's demand for the preliminary studies of the Medaré-Stimla Trunk-line, which would be the first section of the Adriatic-Danubian Railway.

Following upon the unanimous declarations of the Powers, (because those of Italy, Russia, and France were already known), the Porte has found it possible to permit the studies for the Medaré-Stimla line. It is evident that in the permission for that trunk-line is implicitly contained Turkey's consent for its continuation to the Adriatic, which is its necessary and unavoidable consequence. Without it the Adriatic-Danubian Railway would become a mystification which could not be tolerated by the Powers who have promoted and supported it.

In my speech of March 11th, remarking how we should proceed by stages in the solution of the by no means slight difficulties presented by the question of the Balkan Railways, I said :

“To carry out the railway programme other things will be necessary : States who grant subsidies, capitalists who furnish the money, (and among these Italian capital should certainly have a conspicuous part), and, finally, the assent of Turkey. But every day has its task ; let us dwell to-day on the first stage of the question, of the agreement among the Powers, the rest will have to follow.”

Well, I have already said that the consent of the Porte to the preliminary studies no longer constitutes a

difficulty ; I am now happy to announce to the Chamber that the capital necessary for the construction of the line from the Servian frontier to the Adriatic has been provided. This has been done from the 11th of March to the 4th of June, that is to say, in less than three months. Even those who are most impatient and difficult to satisfy will not be honestly able to say we have wasted our time in idleness.

Already the Servian Government had informed us of some engagements it had entered into with the Imperial Ottoman Bank for the formation of a Company to construct and run the railway and the port, without which the line could not subsist. It was, therefore, natural that a group of Italian capitalists connected with the "*Banca d'Italia*" should enter into negotiations with the Ottoman Bank. The signature of an undertaking for the formation of a Company in which French, Italian, Russian, and Servian capital will have a share, has been the result of these negotiations. Thus this very important point has also been happily settled.

How can the other difficulties be overcome, and above all how will it be possible to ensure an equitable remuneration for the capital employed ? This is the end we propose ourselves, to the attainment of which we hold as of good omen the distance already covered following the programme I had fixed upon from the beginning, that is to say, the efficient protection of our interests hand in hand with our allies and friends.

I believe the Chamber will greet with satisfaction these declarations which answer wholly and completely to all the anxieties aroused by this subject and pointed out in the preceding discussions. And now let us come to the relations between Italy and Turkey.

I will not repeat what I have already at other times



stated in Parliament. All that could be said with regard to Tripolitania, its borders, its hinterland, our understandings with the various Powers, our political, economic, and commercial interests, was said by me in my speech of May 10th, 1905, to the Senate. It seems superfluous for me to insist upon our right to open Italian post-offices in those Turkish localities where other Powers had theirs, because this right, which was admitted by all the Powers, was finally recognized by Turkey itself.

Equally evident was the right of Italians to exercise the coasting trade and to acquire landed property. It has been asked in some quarters: was it really indispensable to mobilize three divisions of our fleet to obtain this result? Yes, assuredly. The Porte's declaration of its intention to forcibly prevent the opening of our post-offices did not admit of any other reply. Ours was not arrogance, but the necessary upholding of our national dignity and an energetic affirmation of our incontestable rights. If the methods employed at times by some Turkish authorities should be adopted by the Great Powers in their reciprocal relations, we should have every year a great European war.

Public opinion has approved the Government's action. I do not speak, of course, of those currents which are moved by a chauvinistic or an imperialistic mania, according to which the Government lacks energy if it does not have recourse to violence and is pusillanimous if it respects the rights of others, the stipulations of treaties and the regulations of international relations. I reject in the most absolute manner this kind of chauvinism, by which we should for futile suspicions and pretexts quarrel with all the Great Powers, which would lead us to antagonize the whole world and cause us to be looked upon as an element of international disturbance, and

I have openly more than once condemned it from this tribune.

I speak, therefore, of the great majority of public opinion, which wants a policy of peace, but not deprived of dignity and, while opposed to adventure and imprudence and wishing for peace and peaceful methods, justly demands that Italian interests be efficiently protected and, therefore, welcomed with legitimate satisfaction the rapidity and precision of the mobilization of our fleet, that has shown once more how powerful a factor the possession of a strong Army and Navy is in the carrying out of a sound foreign policy.

I demand from Turkey nothing more than perfect reciprocity. Let the Sublime Porte exact that its Agents hold towards Italy that friendly attitude which we demand from Italian Agents towards Turkey. Now this is not always the case, especially in Tripolitania.

It is too soon to talk to-day of the murder of Father Giustino, because the Government has only just received the report of the accurate inquiry carried out by a magistrate who is universally esteemed for his integrity and impartiality. One thing I may say, however, and it is that through this inquiry the behaviour of the *Kaimakan* of Derna appears wicked, deceitful, and underhand, and that the presence of such an official would not be tolerated in any civilized country.

Summing up, I will say that Italy's policy towards Turkey is clear and straightforward. The unshakable foundation of this policy is and will be the maintenance of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and when I speak of integrity I do not mean to make restrictions or reservations. This excludes in the most absolute manner any intention of occupation of any part of that Empire. We do not contemplate any such occupation and have

never contemplated it. What may have been said and printed to that effect represents intentions that are not ours and which, therefore, should not be taken into any account.

This much established, and starting from this fundamental idea, it is clear that our relations with Turkey, which are now again excellent, may always remain such if Turkey herself will not disturb them by her own action. We are animated towards that Empire by feelings of cordial and sincere friendship and ask nothing better than to develop and consolidate this friendship. Of these sentiments we have given proofs and will continue to give proof if occasion arises. In exchange we have asked Turkey neither privileges nor favours. We only demand—and upon this point no hesitancy or tergiversation would be permissible—that the Ottoman authorities refrain from creating obstacles to the free explication of the activities of Italian citizens, who, like those of other countries, have started or will start economic enterprises within the Empire.

We cannot and are not disposed to tolerate for any reason a discrimination against Italians and a different treatment from that obtained in consequence of treaties, capitulations, and other international stipulations by the subjects of other nations. Upon the determination of these intentions, after the categorical declarations made by us repeatedly at Rome and Constantinople and the energetic measures taken for the incident of the post-offices, the Ottoman Government cannot have the slightest doubt.

I am glad to express on this occasion my satisfaction and gratefulness to the Powers who are our allies and to those who are our friends for the cordial and unanimous support they have given us at Constantinople. This

proves the usefulness of the policy of European solidarity which we have followed in the East, and it also proves that Italy, who at other times suffered irreparable misfortune as a consequence of a policy of unpreparedness and isolation, has no longer to fear that important events should find her unprepared and isolated. The Hon. Luzzatti has certainly made upon this subject noteworthy remarks. He has pointed out the difficulties of the international situation, which have been accentuated by some polemics in the foreign Press. I recognize these difficulties, but draw from them the conclusion that Italy must more than ever persist in her policy and not think of changing it. This is my answer, which I am sure will satisfy him.

There is one question which is not yet entirely settled with Turkey, that of the acquisition by Italians of land and immovables in Tripolitania, and this in spite of the fact that there is no disagreement upon this point between the Sublime Porte and ourselves, and that peremptory and precise orders have been despatched from Constantinople. The delays coming from the intricacies and complex character of Ottoman Law, however, are singularly aggravated by the pedantry and ill-will of the Officials entrusted with its enactment and if for many reasons it is vain to hope that this legislation may be modified, it is legitimate to expect from a friendly country that it should put a stop to the maleficent and subtle arts of its Agents.

To show the friendliness of our intentions towards Turkey I will read to the Chamber a Circular sent by me to our Consular Agents on May 21st, 1907, by which I confirmed instructions I had previously given on other occasions.

“ I deem it advisable to once more recommend to His

Majesty's Consuls residing in the Ottoman Empire to strictly follow the instructions of His Majesty's Government and to give, therefore, to their relations with the local authorities the most friendly and cordial character. In this way we may obtain from those authorities equally benevolent and conciliatory dispositions, and if this reciprocity were to fail, the habitually friendly and correct attitude of our Agents towards the local authorities will give greater efficacy to our legitimate complaints. I add that the fact of having found means of settling satisfactorily and in a friendly and direct manner with the local authorities questions or incidents, without the action of our Embassy at Constantinople being necessary and without letting the incident assume the character of a disagreement between the two Governments, will be counted as a special merit in favour of the Agents in question."

I trust, therefore, that the Imperial Government, which has repeatedly expressed its appreciation of the cordiality of its relations with us (and this has also been confirmed in many manifestations of friendship and sympathy from the Sultan to the King of Italy), will prevent—as it has already in a praiseworthy manner begun to do—subaltern authorities from committing acts of vexation and abuse against Italian citizens which we shall never tolerate. Turkey has in Italy a sincere friend and cannot fail to realize the benefits and unquestionable reciprocal advantages arising from such friendship. And now I must say a few words, (because the subject has already been so much discussed), of the relations between Italy and France in the East.

It has been feared for a moment that the events in the East might have harmed the good relations between Italy and France. Nothing is further from the truth. Our relations with France are excellent. The French

Government was just as friendly as the other Governments in recognizing our rights in the incident with Turkey; and in the question of the Balkan Railways it used its efforts to facilitate the raising of the necessary capital and the agreement of the capitalists.

As to the Heraclea Mines, they have given occasion to not one but two incidents and not between Italy and France, but between the Italian Company working the Koubi Mines and Turkey, and between Turkey and the French Company working upon another concession in the basin of Heraclea. The Italian and French Governments intervened to protect the interests of their subjects against Turkey, but among each other there could be no conflict or disagreement.

Rivalries and dissensions apropos of the protection of Religious Institutions have been mentioned, but also in this case there is no foundation to such rumours, because in the exchange of Notes of August, 1905, Italy and France came to a clear and precise understanding, the substance of which is so well known to all that it is unnecessary for me to repeat it. I will only point out that the application of that agreement to the various Religious Institutions took place of common accord, without giving occasion to any contestation whatever.

Apropos of this question I think it necessary to say a few words. I have always considered the protection of citizens and of national communities abroad, (especially if expressly demanded), as one of the fundamental rights and duties of the State, whatever may be the religious or political opinions of such individuals or communities.

There can be only one limitation to this protection, and that is when the citizen or community becomes unworthy of it by violating the laws either of the country to which he or it belongs or those of the country which

has given it hospitality. I do not believe there is any one who can think differently, but if there should be, I would have a right to tell him that he harbours in his soul feelings of sectarian hatred and not the high and pure sentiment of patriotism.

In any case, those who have attacked me, almost as if the protection of Religious Institutions were my own invention, show the most absolute ignorance of the precedents of Italian politics, of which I did nothing else but continue the long-standing traditions, adding nothing of mine to them.

I will say more : in the understanding with France wishing to amicably settle this question and to avoid the possibility of its giving rise to conflicts in the future, I did not act rigidly upon the unbending principles sustained by my predecessors, and in the application of this agreement I constantly showed the most conciliatory spirit.

The negotiations upon this subject between Italy and France gave always occasion to reciprocal expressions of friendship.

As to Italian politics, I will recall for the enlightenment of those who speak of these matters while in total ignorance of them, that the principles affirmed by Italy with regard to this question are found, without going back to very remote periods, by examining the Diplomatic Documents of 1887, (Depretis Ministry), those of 1889, (Crispi Ministry—Religious Protection in China), and those of 1902, (Zanardelli Ministry—Religious Protection in Albania and in the East).

I will hold myself satisfied by these references in order to not tire the Chamber and unduly lengthen my speech with quotations.

If I have answered to some things which had not been

said in this Chamber, I have done so to show, as at other times I have said, that the Government who feels its strength before this Chamber, feels strong also before the country and does not fear to face public opinion in discussion, nor, when the moment shall come, at the polls.

I cannot end this speech without mentioning two events which have been very gratifying for us. The brief visit paid by the German Emperor to Venice, where the King of Italy went to meet him, gave occasion to a cordial manifestation of friendship between the two Sovereigns.

Prince von Bülow's visit next gave us the opportunity of confirming once more the perfect identity of views in international questions between Germany and Italy and to show how absolutely fantastic were the rumours of an alleged German action not fully in accordance with Italian interests in the question of the Balkan Railways and of Tripolitania, just at a time when Germany had given us proofs of her sincere friendship and fidelity to the alliance.

The jubilee of the Austrian Emperor has given occasion to demonstrations of affection for the venerable Monarch who within his States and throughout Europe is surrounded by such great respect and deference and who has ever turned his thoughts to the interests of peace. It was natural that the King of Italy, who has ever happily and authoritatively voiced the sentiments of the Italian nation, that wishes to maintain and consolidate the relations of alliance and friendship with Austria, should have participated in these demonstrations especially on the day in which the Emperor Francis Joseph received the homage of the Emperor William and of the German Princes.

Honourable Members! The foreign policy of Italy proceeds along the road of continuity, consistency, loyalty and peaceful but persevering and profitable



activity, in which she has entered with assurance, and I hope Parliament will continue to give it its support.

XIII. SITTINGS OF DECEMBER 3RD AND 4TH, 1908—  
(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

The annexation by Austria of Bosnia-Herzegovina—Austria's disregard of the declaration contained in the "*Protocol*" of January 17th, 1871—Could Italy protest?—The attitude of the other Powers—What are the guarantees contained in the Triple Alliance?—Historical sketch of the period elapsing between the "*Berlin Congress*" and the "*Austro-Turkish Convention*" of 1879—Events following this Convention—Attitude of the Powers during this period—Sir Edward Grey's and the London *Times* opinion of the annexation—Does the presence of Austria in Bosnia-Herzegovina give her any preponderance with regard to Italy?—Jacini's, Bonghi's, Minghetti's, and Visconti Venosta's opinions—Italy's position in the Adriatic and Art. 25 and 29 of the "*Treaty of Berlin*"—Great importance for Italy of Austria's renunciation of Art. 25 of the "*Berlin Treaty*" checking her march towards Salonika and her "*Drang nach Osten*"—Value of the modification of Art. 29 of the "*Berlin Treaty*," which creates an independent Montenegro between Austria and Albania—The recent events must not change Italy's policy of alliances and friendships.

Honourable Members! Obligated to speak in a difficult and delicate position, such as has perhaps not been experienced by any political man, I must appeal to the good-will of friends and to the tolerance of opponents, who will not forget that Parliament and the country, in order to judge the Government's action, must first listen to all its defence, *all*, even if it displease them, because I do not speak for my personal gratification, but to austere perform a duty, and in order to do so I need that full

liberty of speech which has ever been the pride of the Italian Parliamentary tribune.

At all events, this discussion was inevitable, since for the past two months the country has been stirred by one of the liveliest political debates ever recorded.

In the first discussion upon foreign affairs, which took place in the Chamber after the "*Berlin Treaty*," Ruggiero Bonghi, beginning to speak, said with his habitual perspicacity: "We must clear the country of the infinite confusion which has clouded its spirit during these last months." And to-day I could begin my speech with those same words.

Therefore, to enlighten public opinion which has been troubled and perplexed by the raging of the recent polemics, it was indispensable that an ample and exhaustive Parliamentary discussion should take place and that the National Assembly should be called upon to say the last word upon this lively controversy, not only to pass judgment upon the past, but as a sure direction for the future.

It is true that I had been warned that my opponents were ready to censure equally my silence or my speech. If I had been silent, some of them would have protested against the Government's supposed pretension of withdrawing foreign affairs from Parliamentary control; and every one knows how much this theme lends itself to rhetorical declamations. If, on the other hand, I had spoken, others would have charged me with revealing before the proper time our programme for the Conference, thus binding Italy's liberty.

But I begin by declaring that, if the Conference will take place, we shall go to it with just the same liberty enjoyed by the others. I say this at once, so I shall not have to repeat it later.

Having thus excluded the danger that the Government's declarations might compromise Italian interests, in view of imaginary territorial compensations which none of the Powers who signed the "*Berlin Treaty*" have demanded, the present debate will have one great advantage, that of avoiding the entertaining of illusions which would not be realized by the Conference and would thus risk to give fresh food to the agitation and malcontent of the country.

This will be an act of political sincerity ; political sincerity to which, for my part, I have never failed, because at Carate I did not try to create false impressions, but only gave a different estimate of what had taken place.

After having cordially thanked the Hon. Fusinato, Galli, De Marinis, Alfredo Baccelli, Chimirri and Santini, who have so validly and authoritatively defended the Government's action, I will endeavour to at once clear myself of an accusation that is independent of the international situation and which regards myself exclusively and personally : that of having spoken inopportunistically at Carate, showing disregard for the respect due to treaties and arousing in the country an expectation which was soon disappointed and which gave way to an almost general impression of delusion and resentment. Well, I will myself impartially criticize the Carate speech, and I will say that, if in the substance of that speech there is nothing for me to disavow, from the point of view of the impression it was to produce and to which I did not give sufficient thought, I find in it three faults : a fault of omission, a fault of excessive sincerity, and a fault of insight. But, before confessing these faults, I must reject an unjust accusation. I have been reproached for the expression I used of "*subtle discriminations by which Diplomacy has created a fictitious juridical status which is in contrast with the de facto situation.*"

Well, I maintain this phrase. I do not judge the substance of the work done by Diplomacy at the "*Berlin Congress*," but, whatever the substance, it is certain that the form adopted was doubtful, hypocritical and full of snares for that very peace which the "*Congress*" aimed at preserving.

With that form it postponed the difficulties and did not solve them; the unconditional occupations for an indefinite term, the *de facto* possession of territories by some Powers that leaves to others a bare sovereignty which consists of nothing, are forms which lend themselves to all the interpretations and usurpations and create agitated and dangerous situations, which one day or other must be solved, as Bosnia, Bulgaria, and Crete have shown. And I hold that if in the future Diplomacy will be more sincere and will repudiate these, that I have justly called "*subtle discriminations*," it will be so much gained for the cause of civilization and peace.

Now let us come to my errors. The fault of omission consists in not having expressly affirmed that no possible variation is admissible in an international treaty without the consent of all the contracting parties. But this is a principle of Common Law and, following upon my instructions, our Ambassador at Constantinople together with the Ambassadors of other Powers has affirmed it; and I myself have confirmed it, upholding with the others the necessity and opportunity of a Conference, in order that the new situation which has been created in the East be given a juridical solution.

It never for one moment crossed my mind that my not proclaiming this principle could give the impression that I disavowed or placed it in doubt. But, since many people have thought so, it is evident I would have done better to explain my meaning more clearly, and,

had I done so, I would have saved myself considerable annoyance.

As to my second error, I was excessively sincere when, knowing and foreseeing how matters would have ended, I predicted it, but woe befell me for having done so.

There is no doubt, therefore, that I would have done better to wait that events should have unfolded themselves in the way I had from the very beginning exactly and surely foreseen, rather than anticipate them by my declarations.

Lastly, I committed an error of insight in believing that the public, with sudden intuition, would have given to Articles 25 and 29 of the "*Berlin Treaty*" that very great importance which I attached to them and which they in effect possess, as I hope to be able to show with the present speech.

Could Austria-Hungary consider the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a question concerning Turkey alone and not the other Powers who signed the "*Berlin Treaty*," and could she, without consulting any one, not even Turkey, accomplish it and declare she allowed no discussion upon the *fait accompli*? It appears evident to me that she could not. International theory and practice both hold implicitly in all stipulations without a definite term the clause *rebus sic stantibus*; therefore, it is admitted that a State may free itself from stipulations which no longer answer to the circumstances which determined them and are in contradiction with the present situation; but upon condition of proving the existence of the factors which have modified the situation already settled by the stipulations and upon condition of securing the assent of the other contracting parties.

Austria-Hungary did not take the pains of fulfilling the first of these conditions and of proving that for

Bosnia-Herzegovina the situation was so changed. It is even more difficult to understand why she did not fulfil the second and should have chosen, instead of the legal solution with the consent of all the interested parties, a unilateral solution which has created a difficult situation in Europe, that still presents many uncertainties, which has had a considerable repercussion upon the internal situation of some States, and has so deeply perturbed the Italian political atmosphere. And one can hardly understand this attitude of Austria when one considers that she had herself proclaimed with the other Powers the principle established in the "*Protocol*" of the "*London Conference*" of January 17th, 1871.

Here is the text of that declaration :—

"The Plenipotentiaries of Germany, England, Austria, Italy, Russia, and Turkey together, recognize as an essential principle of the right of nations that no Power can free herself from the engagements undertaken by treaty, nor modify its stipulations, without the consent of the contracting parties by means of a friendly understanding."

It was, therefore, natural that I should at once recognize the opportunity of a Conference and that I should in this have found myself of one accord with Mr. Isvolsky, who was on his way to Paris, London and Berlin to arrange its programme.

Should Italy have done more? Could she protest, as many have suggested? I do not think so. The protest, to be serious and efficient, should have been accompanied by the determination of enforcing it with coercive means should it have passed unheeded. These are the only protests which have any importance, and the only ones which are worthy of a great nation. But I have heard no one suggest we should have recourse to these

means, and events have shown that, had we done so, we should have been alone. Some declarations which were made in other countries, and were judged much more energetic than mine, did not in practice lead to a different attitude, because they were followed by a no less prudent and calm action than the one adopted by me from the beginning.

Therefore, the attitude of the other Powers has been the best justification of my action, and the most conclusive answer to the attacks against me.

The annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina had been spoken of for some time, but it was not considered near at hand ; now it is known that Austria has, with a sudden move which has come as a surprise to every one, carried it into effect much earlier than was expected.

The Hon. Guicciardini, in an interesting interview upon the new *régime* established in Turkey, examined the possibility of the eventual annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, asking himself if the Powers who signed the "*Berlin Treaty*" could have agreed to it without compensation. Instead of the word "*compensation*," I have used the expression, "*balance of interests*," but, as I will show later, I do not believe that between the Hon. Guicciardini's idea and mine there is any substantial difference, because the Hon. Guicciardini, as his precedents show, certainly agrees with me that this balance of interests should have been found in the East and not outside it.

Here I must pause a moment to resolutely face a question which has formed almost the central point of the Hon. Barzilai's speech, and which has aroused great interest in the Chamber.

The Hon. Barzilai has made two very serious affirmations, that is to say : first, that I have taken no notice

of a correspondence existing in the Archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and in which the Austrian Ambassador, Count Wimpfen would have promised Count Maffei, the General Secretary of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the cession of the Province of Trent as a compensation for the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina ; second, that I have overlooked a supposed Article 4 of the Treaty of the Triple Alliance, which, he alleges, would have assured Italy of compensation in case Austria had altered to her advantage the *status quo* in the East.

To the Hon. Barzilai's first affirmation I answer that I have never heard of the letters he alludes to. It is customary for Foreign Affairs Ministers, in leaving office, to hand over to their successor all those secret documents which have any importance. These documents have been handed over to me twice ; once by the Hon. Morin, and again by the Hon. Guicciardini, and neither the one nor the other ever said a word about those letters, therefore I never knew of their existence.

Nevertheless, on Tuesday evening, as soon as the Hon. Barzilai had ended his speech, I ordered a very accurate search both in the private and general Archives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, from which it has resulted that these letters are not there. I have, moreover, personally questioned Senator Malvano, who for so long held the office of General Secretary to the Ministry, and he has declared he has never seen those letters, has never heard them mentioned by any one, and that he absolutely ignored that such negotiations or proposals had ever taken place between Representatives of the Austrian and Italian Governments.

I must add, that from other diligent investigations among all the secret and public documents existing at the Foreign Affairs Ministry it has resulted that neither



during the negotiations for the Franco-Italo-Austrian Alliance of 1869, nor in the period from 1879 to 1881, nor lastly during the negotiations and conclusion of the Triple Alliance (1881-1882), and its successive renewals, was any declaration ever made as to the possibility of the cession by Austria-Hungary to Italy of the Province of Trent.

There exist, unfortunately, repeated and explicit declarations to the contrary by the Austro-Hungarian Government. Moreover, the affirmation which has been made to-day is not new. It was addressed to the Hon. Cairoli in July, 1878, and, as this happened during the period in which Parliament was not sitting, the Hon. Cairoli published in the paper "*Il Diritto*" the following official notice:—

"We solemnly affirm, appealing to the unassailable testimony of documents, that never was any negotiation started by the Crispi-Depretis Cabinet nor the preceding one to secure for Italy a compensation for the eventual cession of Bosnia-Herzegovina to Austria-Hungary, or to introduce the question of our frontiers at the '*Congress*.'"

And now as to the Triple Alliance. It is a very delicate subject, because I am not at liberty to reveal its stipulations without the consent of the other contracting parties. Still, without saying anything new, I find I have implicitly answered the Hon. Barzilai at a time in which my answer was necessarily free from suspicion, that is to say, when the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina was not yet being spoken of.

The declaration I made to the Senate, in answer to an interpellation by the Hon. di Camporeale, has been quoted by the Hon. Barzilai almost to uphold his argument, but on the contrary it goes to prove that it cannot be

upheld. What did I say to the Senate, in fact? That, apart from the "*Berlin Treaty*," the Triple Alliance guarantees us from any alteration of the *status quo*. Where? In Albania and Macedonia; therefore, evidently only in case of fresh occupations in those regions. I refer to a declaration already publicly made and will add nothing further upon this subject.

Those who have spoken of Bosnia and of Herzegovina have done so as if we were at the eve of the "*Berlin Treaty*," as if neither that treaty nor the events which have taken place in that region during thirty years existed, and as if Austria had not yet occupied those provinces and had not, as a matter of fact, exercised in them the most complete sovereignty, which no one, up to the present, had taken the pains to oppose.

I will, therefore, make a brief historical sketch of a period that has not been here sufficiently understood and appreciated, the one elapsing between the "*Berlin Congress*" and the "*Austro-Turkish Convention*" of 1879. Thirty years have now passed, and this period belongs at present to history, therefore, I may speak of it with the fidelity of the historian, without offending the susceptibilities of any one.

I will begin by reading an extract from "*Protocol*" 8th of the sitting of June 18th of the "*Congress*." The official report says:

"The Chairman, speaking in the name of the majority in this '*Congress*,' points out to the Ottoman Delegates that, without the intervention of the '*Congress*,' they would find themselves bound by the totality of the articles of the '*Santo Stefano Treaty*,' and that this intervention restores to them a province much more vast and fertile than Bosnia, that is to say, the region which extends itself from the Aegean Sea to the Balkans."

It is Prince Bismarck's idea, I do not know if very logical, but certainly very clear. On the one side Austria-Hungary acquires Bosnia, on the other Turkey, as an advantageous compensation, definitely receives that part of Macedonia which the "*Santo Stefano Treaty*" had assigned to Bulgaria.

Austria-Hungary should have come to an understanding with Turkey for the occupation of Bosnia, instead of which she occupies it straight away, and, because she meets with a lively resistance, especially among the Mussulman population, which has taken up arms, she breaks it down after a bloody war and changes the occupation into a conquest, at the cost of over 200,000,000 crowns and the sacrifice of thousands of men.

Do you think that any of the Powers in seeing what was to have been a peaceful occupation transformed into a bloody conquest raised any objection? By no means! The French Minister, Waddington, speaks in those days at Laon, the English Minister, Cross, at Liverpool; shortly after Gladstone himself speaks. All of them discuss the "*Berlin Treaty*" and its effects, but are silent over the conquest of Bosnia.

In the meanwhile the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Constantinople declares to the Sublime Porte that Austria-Hungary having occupied Bosnia, shedding the blood of her soldiers, will have to annex it by right of conquest. The Porte appeals to the Powers, protests against the blood which has been shed, and demands that the occupation have a temporary character, but she finds no one disposed to listen to her.

England declares the Turkish protest "*untimely*," Germany calls it "*imprudent*." Germany upholds Austria unconditionally, England has given her *carte blanche*, because Lord Beaconsfield had intervened in the Eastern

Question with the intent of calling Austria to Bosnia and Novibazar in order to paralyze the action of Montenegro and Servia and create in the Balkans a contrast of interests between Austria-Hungary and Russia ; France and Italy are silent ; Russia threatens, as a protest, not to evacuate Roumelia, but remains isolated.

The Government was reproached for Italy's silence in the sitting of February 4th, 1879, by the actual Speaker of this Chamber, Hon. Marcora, who pointed out the contradiction between the terms of the "*Berlin Treaty*" and the means used by Austria to enforce it. It was no longer an occupation, but a conquest real and proper.

From Bosnia Austria-Hungary should have passed to Novibazar, but the Albanians had gathered at the frontier to defend it, and Count Andrassy, concerned by the dissatisfaction aroused in his country on account of the millions expended and the blood shed for Bosnia, did not dare proceed to a second conquest, that of Novibazar, and entered into negotiations with Turkey.

Thus we reach the "*Austro-Turkish Convention*" of April 22nd, 1879, which represents a compromise, because, on the one hand the Sultan no longer demands that the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina have a provisional character, contenting himself with a nominal sovereignty over those regions, and, on the other, Austria limits herself to placing only three garrisons in the Novibazar district, maintaining the Turkish garrisons.

The Sultan hesitates to sign this "*Convention*," for he shrinks from renouncing to the provisional character of the Austrian occupation, which, while not resulting from the "*Berlin Treaty*," was established, it is believed, by a secret engagement with Turkey signed also at Berlin by Count Andrassy. But the combined imperious, repeated pressures of the Ambassadors of the Great

European Powers, and especially those of England and Germany, finally overcome the Sultan's reluctance ; the "*Convention*" is signed and the fate of Bosnia and of Herzegovina is decided.

But let us see what happens after the "*Austro-Turkish Convention*" of 1879. The years pass, and new events and new measures confirm, complete, and strengthen Austria-Hungary's powers of unconditional sovereignty, without Turkey or any of the Great Powers ever saying a word, expressing an opinion or making a remark. I will not cite a whole series of facts which could be adduced, but cannot pass in silence two typical cases, because they show how acquiescent Italy has been in the past, and that she is awakening rather late.

These facts are : the case of the *exequatur* to the Consuls, and that of the Capitulations. While the letters patent for the Consuls in Bulgaria and Egypt continue to be directed to His Majesty the Emperor of the Ottomans, the Consuls in Bosnia and in Herzegovina receive no letters patent, but their appointment is communicated by a simple note to the Imperial and Royal Ministry at Vienna. Count di Robilant, our Ambassador at Vienna, called upon to give his opinion upon this procedure, declares that he has nothing to say against it, because "it cannot be disguised that the position of the occupied provinces with respect to the Dual Monarchy is notably changed, since, if a legal sanction is still lacking, it cannot be disputed that, as a matter of fact, the occupation is accomplished."

As to the Capitulations that were in force also in Bulgaria and Egypt, when their abolition was proposed, it gave occasion to demands for substantial compensations. These Capitulations, which are an institution that gives the special aspect and character of Ottoman

territory to the country that is subject to them, were suppressed in Herzegovina in the most simple and speedy manner imaginable.

Germany and England renounce of their own free will the jurisdiction of their Consuls. The other Powers follow suit. Austria turns to Italy and says: "Why do you not do as the others?" And what does Italy answer? She answers with the Note of the Foreign Affairs Minister, Mancini, dated August 12th, 1881, which says:—

"In Bosnia-Herzegovina there is a regular Civil Administration founded upon the same principles which regulate the corresponding Administration in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. There can be no doubt upon our decision. We have no difficulty in instructing our Consul in Serajevo to suspend every act of contentious jurisdiction and to consider Bosnia-Herzegovina, while it is governed by an Administration which complies with all the exigencies of civilization, as one of those regions to which Art. II., Title II. of the Consular Law is not applicable."

This explains why England, from whom came the most severe condemnation at the form of the annexation, gave to it a theoretical and not a practical importance, and, in fact, Sir Edward Grey in his speech to the constituents of Wooler, said that no appreciable change had taken place in Bosnia and in Herzegovina in consequence of the annexation, in the same manner that the difference between the *autonomy* and *independence* of Bulgaria was merely sentimental, and the *Times* said that the annexation altered in nothing the pre-existing state of things, and did Turkey only a *moral* wrong.

This explains why to me, and to those who were acquainted with these precedents, the annexation of

Bosnia and Herzegovina did not make the same impression it made to those who had no knowledge or only a partial and imperfect knowledge of them.

What I want to come to is this. Formulate if you wish your accusations, but not against me. Turn them rather against those who, when yet in time, did not oppose this series of acts and not against me who happen to assist to this annexation when everybody else had prepared it, consented to it or tolerated it ; not against me, upon whose shoulders you are trying to accumulate with manifest injustice a whole load of responsibilities which in no way belong to me.

I will not discuss if the presence of Austria-Hungary in Bosnia-Herzegovina is harmful to Italy, but I cannot help recalling that there have been in Italy men eminent for their intelligence, and for the services they have rendered to the country, who in 1878 and 1879 affirmed that Austria-Hungary in Bosnia was *not* a danger to Italy, and these men were called Stefano Jacini, Ruggiero Bonghi, Marco Minghetti, and Emilio Visconti Venosta.

Almost the whole of the third chapter of Jacini's book upon the "*Treaty of Berlin*" tends to show that the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina does not give Austria any preponderance with regard to Italy, and Ruggiero Bonghi in the preface of his book refutes the objections raised to the occupation in the name of Italian interests. Marco Minghetti, speaking to the constituents of Legnago on October 27th, 1878, said :—

"Let us speak clearly : must Italy consider the Austrian occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a danger, a menace, a weakening of her own position in the Adriatic ? I do not think so, and I do not consider that Bosnia and Herzegovina give to Austria any preponderance over us in the Adriatic and in the Aegean sea."

These words were uttered by a Venetian Deputy, and were greeted with applause by Venetian Constituents. I point this out, because the Hon. Fradeletto, in his quality of Deputy of Venice, has spoken as if the question of Bosnia-Herzegovina concerned him more directly.

In the same way another Deputy of a Venetian Constituency, Emilio Visconti Venosta, expressed himself in the Chamber of Deputies on January 31st, 1879. "I do not believe that the possession of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austria creates in the Adriatic a displacement of maritime power and of commercial importance which weakens our position in that sea, injures our commercial development or threatens our national security."

It is objected, it is true, that if our interests are not injured, the principle of nationality, which must ever inspire Italian policy, because to it Italy owes its existence, has been disowned, but this objection could have been of value while Bosnia was yet untouched, before the "*Treaty of Berlin*," and not to-day. We have proclaimed that in case of the *status quo* in the East being altered the principle of nationality should prevail in the Balkan Peninsula, as far as is allowed by the mixture of races and religions; we have always shown the small Balkan States the most sincere sympathy, but it is not in our power to undo the situation which has been created and consolidated by the acquiescence of all, ourselves included, during thirty years.

At all events, Serbia and Montenegro do not at present expect very much, and they have prepared for the Conference more moderate demands. Nevertheless, we have had to tell them what was told them by Russia, that is to say, that we, while following them with sympathy, would not be able to unfold in their favour anything but a diplomatic action, and, therefore, we have advised them



to not plunge themselves lightly in adventures of which they would be alone to suffer the consequences. Moreover, they must recognize their errors. In these last years we have often advised them to be united and of one accord ; instead of which the rivalries, the jealousies, the seed of hatred scattered among the various Christian races by the massacres of the wretched Macedonian Bands, have so embittered the relations between these countries that a few months ago it was feared there would be a war between Bulgaria and Servia, and Diplomatic relations were clamorously broken off between Servia and Montenegro.

It is, therefore, a complete work of reconstruction which is wanted in the Balkans ; we ever had a clear vision of this necessity, and it is not our fault if our disinterested advice was neglected, and if our suggestions were not welcomed by those who had the greatest interest in following them.

When the Balkan States will form a compact force which will oppose valid resistance against whoever shall make an attempt upon their unity, all covetousness will cease, and the East will no longer be a menace and a danger to the peace of Europe.

Among the Balkan States I naturally include Turkey, who has given the world the admirable example of a profound revolution suddenly and peacefully accomplished, and has shown the purifying effects of liberty. From the beginning we greeted with sympathy the new *régime* inaugurated there among so many hopes ; we have, more than others, interest in supporting it, and in the formation of a prosperous and strong Turkey.

Our action of peace, of progress, of union with the Balkan States is in conformity with that of the other Powers. Among these there is one to whom an ancient

tradition has assigned this task—I am speaking of Russia. I have endeavoured to render more intimate our relations with Russia also when there existed in Italy currents of opinion which were opposed to it. At present, fortunately, evidence has asserted itself, and those currents of opinion have ceased to exist. The *rapprochement* between Italy and Russia, to which Mr. Isvolsky and I have turned our efforts, is to-day an accomplished fact, which will not fail to have important consequences in the future.

In the meanwhile we have come to an understanding with the Powers more directly interested in the matter, to assure the prompt execution of the Adriatic-Danubian Railway, from which Serbia and Montenegro expect their economic independence. The negotiations continue very actively, and I shall soon be able to give the Chamber more definite news. Also, in order not to leave thorny and dangerous situations in the East, we are endeavouring to promote an understanding between Bulgaria and Turkey and between Greece and Turkey, to whom we wish to show the greatest regard.

Now let us see what are the interests in the East which we must protect. The Hon. Guicciardini, in the sitting of February 23rd, 1903, very justly observed: “First of all it would be well to agree as to what is to be meant by Italian interests in the Balkans. Our interests are in that part of the Balkans which lies by the Adriatic Sea. We must not have any ambition of territorial occupation, but we cannot allow that either at Skutari, Durazzo, or Valona be hoisted the flag of one of the Great Powers.”

In his speech of May 14th, 1904, the Hon. Guicciardini added: “No division in zones of influence, which would not solve the question, and would add fresh difficulties

to those already existing, therefore, no occupation, as is now and again suggested, of any strategical point on the coast or in the interior, and, therefore, also no territorial divisions, etc., etc."

This shows that the Hon. Guicciardini excluded territorial compensations and wished us to seek elsewhere the protection of our interests.

The Hon. di San Giuliano in his "*Lettere sull' Albania*" ("Letters on Albania"), had shown that our interests in the Adriatic cannot find protection or compensation but in the Adriatic itself, and that this should be our firm, positive, and clear object, even though a purely negative one.

Granted, therefore, that our interests in the East are true and real, as I have always believed, and as, with me, have always believed all those who have occupied themselves with this question, and that they are not a pretext to secure in any way compensations elsewhere, as many have believed, it is evident that it is in the East itself that we must make sure of the balance and protection of these interests. Excluding occupations and divisions at the expense of Turkey, which no one has ever contemplated, this balance and protection can be had in one way only, that is to say, by eliminating those international compacts which threaten it.

Now, examining the "*Treaty of Berlin*" and leaving aside the occupation of Bosnia, I find in it only two Articles harmful for Italy: the 25th and the 29th. It follows, therefore, that if the elimination of these articles were possible, the "*Berlin Treaty*" would no longer contain dispositions harmful for Italy, and we could well affirm to have provided for the protection of our interests in the best possible manner.

It has already been said with good reason, that if

Austria-Hungary should propose to annul the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, but should continue to hold it with full sovereignty as heretofore, and at the same time should want to preserve and exercise the rights given her by Articles 25 and 29, we should have to reject such a proposal as we would be the losers in the bargain.

It is easy to show the great importance for Italy of the suppression of Article 25, and the modification of Article 29 of the "*Berlin Treaty*," because such importance is founded upon the unanimous authority of all those in Italy who, from 1878 to the present day, have treated the subject either in publications or Parliamentary speeches. All have unanimously always affirmed that Austria's right to occupy Novibazar opened for her the road to Salonika, and that the surveillance of the coast of Montenegro offered her a pretext to extend her domination in the Adriatic. All have unanimously denounced the possibility of an Austrian march upon Salonika, which from time to time was declared alarmingly imminent, as well as any further extension of Austrian supremacy along the Adriatic coast, as a danger for Italy.

There is no doubt that, if Austria had pushed her occupation of the Novibazar district beyond Mitrovitza, and had started towards Salonika, such an event would have made an enormous impression, caused deep agitation, and the consciousness of injury to a national interest would have been general.

Now then, how is it that in learning not only that Austria will not advance in the Novibazar district, but that she withdraws from it and that her march towards Salonika becomes henceforward impossible,—because she has broken the legal instrument she possessed, which enabled her to accomplish it, that is to say, Article 25,—

how is it, I ask myself, that this news does not produce as much satisfaction as the occupation would have produced unfavourable impression ?

There have been some *chauvins* of the Yellow Press, who, apropos of Articles 25 and 29, have repeated with me on this occasion the same manœuvre which they already once attempted when the question of the Balkan Railways suddenly came up last spring. So long as the Danubian-Adriatic Railway was considered impossible, they said and wrote it represented for Italy a vital interest ; as soon as I was able to announce that this railway would have been constructed, they cried aloud its utter uselessness with the same easy freedom with which they had before magnified its importance.

In the same way, so long as it was held that Articles 25 and 29 would never have been abandoned by Austria, they were held up as a scarecrow and an imminent danger to Italy ; the day I announce that the one is annulled and the other modified, I am told that these are trifles, things which have no importance.

Already in my speech of 1906 I dwelt at length upon the pernicious action of the Yellow Press in foreign affairs. Strong but just admonishments were directed to it lately by Prince von Bülow, and also Sir Edward Grey justly remarked in his speech at Scarborough that this Press easily makes up events and attributes to Governments intentions which are wholly imaginary. Well, I have no faith in the conversion of such hardened and obdurate sinners. I believe that, in spite of these admonishments, both in Italy and elsewhere, that Press will continue to alarm, to invent, to excite passion and prejudice. But it will always meet with two correctives : the one in the scepticism of the public, which is ever increasing, and the other in the action of the statesmen

who will continue to work, in spite of it and against it, for peace.

Just as we have our *chauvins*, Austria has hers, and the latter are not satisfied with the elimination of Articles 25 and 29. Listen to what one of them says in an article of the *Oesterreichische Rundschau* :

"It must have been Russia and Italy who have demanded the evacuation of the Novibazar District, and these two States are also those who will most profit by this renunciation. While Austria loses the best means of following in the future an active Balkan policy, Russia, and especially Italy, acquire greater influence at the expense of our own. In order to understand the full value of the evacuation of the Novibazar District, it is necessary to recall the fundamental conception of Andrassy's policy. By the occupation of Novibazar, a wedge was to be placed between Servia and Montenegro and a bridge thrown by means of which our influence should push forward '*beyond Mitrovitza*,' as the '*Berlin Treaty*' says. This bridge is now torn down, the wedge is withdrawn, and the '*beyond Mitrovitza*' forever lost. Thus has the platform, by means of which we could have made our economic and political influence felt in Macedonia, been abandoned."

And, as at the time this article was published, Count von Aehrenthal had not yet spoken to the Delegations of the relinquishment of those dispositions of Article 29, which limit the action of Montenegro, the Austrian *chauvin* added :

"Fortunately, neither the speech from the throne nor the exposition of the Foreign Affairs Minister mention a second concession hinted at by the daily papers ; it is therefore to be hoped that the renunciation of the rights conferred upon us by Article 29 of the '*Berlin Treaty*' may not have taken place, and will not take place in the future."

The Chamber will forgive me if in this part of my speech I must abound in quotations, but I wish to document it in a complete manner, I want it to be embodied by facts, and that it be supported, rather than by my own affirmations, by the testimony of others, and the Chamber must permit this documented demonstration.

I am so profoundly convinced of the importance of the total elimination of Article 25, and of the modification of Article 29 that, when I have heard this importance doubted, when I have seen it mocked and belittled, I have been greatly surprised and deeply pained. Abuse has left me indifferent, but I have felt discouraged by this glaring, enormous injustice.

I have quoted a recent Austrian testimony and will cite only one more among the many I could choose from the articles of Viennese journals written right after the "*Berlin Treaty*." On April 22nd, 1878, a Vienna paper wrote :

"With the occupation of Novibazar the situation for Austria is wholly changed. The position in Bosnia is a defensive one against Serbia and Montenegro ; the position in Novibazar is an offensive one, an outlet against whoever may occupy the Balkan Peninsula. From Novibazar we may threaten Albania, attack Bulgaria from the side and foresee the possibility of a bout to Salonika. To go to Novibazar with the purpose of *remaining* there would have no meaning : Novibazar can only be a *station*, the first step of a vast political action."

But let us leave foreign testimony and return to ourselves. Ruggiero Bonghi's book, "*La Crisi d'Oriente ed il Trattato di Berlino*" ("The Oriental Crisis and the Berlin Treaty"), is still a work of fresh and living actuality. How much good sense, how much depth, what clear foresight in those pages ! Well, Ruggiero Bonghi frankly

declared that he did not feel he could make any reproach to Italian Diplomacy for the occupation by Austria of Bosnia-Herzegovina, he even thought it would have done well to consent to it without any remark ; what he *did* reproach it for was something quite apart from it : he reproached Italian Diplomacy for having consented to Articles 25 and 29 and for not having made it impossible for Austria, by the occupation of the Novibazar district, to advance in the future to the Aegean, to the gates of Salonika, and for having consented that, by the rights granted to her upon the Antivari port, she could extend her domination in the Adriatic.

Let us now come to the Parliamentary discussions. All the opinions expressed are in conformity with my point of view ; but in order to not be too lengthy I will limit myself to recalling those of the men who have with greater competency and diligence occupied themselves with the Eastern Question. The Hon. Barzilai will certainly not resent my placing him in this class if, to uphold my argument, I will quote what he said in this Chamber. All these men have always pointed out two dangers—Austria's approach to Salonika by way of the Novibazar District, or to Skutari by means of the protectorate of the coasts of Montenegro. No one, naturally, has given a thought to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

On June 7th, 1901, Giovanni Bovio said :

“ Austria, with her eyes turned now towards Salonika, now towards Skutari, aims at dominating two seas. In either case woe to Italy ! ”

On February 23rd, 1903, the Hon. De Marinis expressed himself as follows :—

“ Austria has taken fresh steps in the District of Novibazar. Do you consider this of small importance ? But this is part of Austria's whole plan in the Balkan Peninsula,



which aims, through Old Servia, Mitrovitza and Skopia, to reach Salonika."

The Hon. De Martino in the same sitting of February 23rd, 1903, was even more explicit. He said—

"There are two facts which cannot fail to cause us anxiety, the one already existing, the other which could take place when we least expect it. The first of these facts is the condition of Montenegro, who, in a state of *dependency* in relation to Austria, can no longer be considered as an efficient bulwark between Dalmatia and Albania. The second is the possible occupation of the Novibazar district, which has been foreseen by the '*Berlin Treaty*.' If Austria should occupy this territory which forms a wedge between Montenegro and Servia, her supremacy in Albania would be an accomplished fact. If the clause of Article 25 were to be applied, the event would be most serious for Italy."

This brings me to the Hon. Barzilai. The Hon. Barzilai has tried in his speech upon this debate to dispose of that part of the question relating to the Novibazar district in a summary fashion, and has said that its importance is ancient history. Not so very ancient, Hon. Barzilai, because only four years ago, during the sitting of May 17th, 1904, you inveighed against me with the following words :—

"When, one of these days, an alarm will be given and the military march of Austria-Hungary to Salonika will be heard of, and when Austria will take advantage of Article 25 of the '*Berlin Treaty*' to strengthen her garrisons in Novibazar, how will you, Hon. Tittoni, prevent or render more remote this danger ?"

I could not at that time answer the Hon. Barzilai satisfactorily, because Article 25 of the "*Berlin Treaty*," with the famous "*beyond Mitrovitza*," bore the signature

of Italy. To-day my answer is exhaustive, because Article 25 no longer exists.

I finally come to the Hon. di Scalea, who has said many things, but has failed to mention another speech of his of a few months ago.

The Hon. di Scalea, in the sitting of March 10th of the present year, so expressed himself :—

“ But I ask myself, has Austria ever renounced the right which was given her by Article 25 of the ‘ *Berlin Treaty* ’ ? On the contrary, for some time she is putting it slowly but surely in execution. And this article is aggravated by another, Article 29, which regards Montenegro and paralyses every development of that country under Austrian servitude. This Article is truly insidious, even more so than Article 25.”

Therefore, according to the Hon. di Scalea, Article 29 was even more objectionable than Article 25. I point this out for those who, while admitting the importance of the abolition of Article 25, still contest that of Article 29.

In what does the importance of the renunciation to the limitation of the sovereignty of Montenegro lie ? It lies in this, that to-day, owing to the protectorate over the coast of Montenegro, Austria reaches as far as Albania. Suppress this article, and between Albania and Austria you will have an independent Montenegro.

After so many authoritative and explicit declarations on the importance of Articles 25 and 29 of the “ *Treaty of Berlin* ” and on the dangers and snares they held, shall we spend many more words to show how greatly we should rejoice over their elimination ? I do not think so. I also do not think it worth while to discuss the amazing affirmation that the question of Novibazar concerns Turkey only, and that the port of Antivari concerns Montenegro alone.

Must the recent events change our attitude towards our allies or the nations which are our friends? I do not think so. I firmly believe that we must persist in the policy of alliances and friendships we have so far followed, not only because it is in conformity with our interests, but because it is also the only one Italy should follow. I have shown this so often in this Chamber, with such an abundance of arguments and so exhaustive a refutation of the objections raised, that I do not think it necessary to again dwell on this point. The alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary, to which we are faithful, must not, to my mind, be an obstacle to our traditional friendship with England, to our renewed friendship with France, and to the recent understanding with Russia.

Certainly, this is not an easy policy to follow, but, if I am not mistaken, it is what the Chamber wants, because I have heard it repeated in all quarters that we must remain in the Triple Alliance, but with complete independence.

However, in order to overcome the difficulties which are unceasingly arising, this policy demands great prudence and sincerity, it requires that the Foreign Affairs Minister, having in view only the interests of the country, should be ready to accept quietly, when necessary, even a momentary unpopularity at home, in order to inspire abroad unlimited confidence. Well, while abroad we have been able to inspire this confidence, while we have obtained that Italy be considered with sympathy as a precious element for peace and for the balance of power in the concert of nations, and those who are our friends have nothing to fear from our alliances, which are animated by peaceful intentions, it is right here in Italy that restless spirits, longing for novelty, impatient for changes, intimate to the Government to decide itself and *choose* between the

alliance and our friendships and to repudiate the one or the others !

Well, to these intimations we will oppose a categorical refusal. The Government will not make this choice, and if Parliament wishes to make it, it must entrust it to other men. I believe that Italy's foreign policy is the only one that, under the present conditions, it is advisable for her to follow. In one of his speeches to the Senate in 1879, Stefano Jacini pronounced words which even to-day should sound as an admonishment to many. He said : " It is a prejudice to believe that there be more than one possible programme for foreign politics in Italy ; to suppose that several such programmes could be easily made to order to suit each of the different political parties at home. On the contrary there is but one line of action in foreign affairs in Italy and there can be but one."

Before closing I must briefly touch upon a question which has been mentioned by several of the speakers in the present discussion, that is to say, of the connection between foreign politics and military expenditure. This connection is of the closest, because it may well be said that a country's foreign policy depends essentially upon two factors—the confidence it inspires and the forces at its disposal. Therefore, armaments must be provided, and upon this subject there can be no uncertainty. Having said this, I equally affirm that a Minister who should not make every effort to maintain peace, a Minister who, without the gravest and most peremptory reasons, should give rise to a condition of things which should lead the nation to an unnecessary war, would commit a crime against humanity and against his country.

I now owe a few words to the Hon. Fortis. I have admired his speech, which has thrilled the Chamber with patriotic emotion, and I agree in his conclusion that it is

necessary to provide for the Army and for the Navy, but this must not at all be interpreted in the sense that there be a menace or danger of war, or that we should wish for anything of the kind.

It is necessary that from these benches there come a word, which, without ceasing to be patriotic, be reassuring, calm, and peaceful. The perfecting of our armaments is intended by the Government only as a necessary complement of the policy of peace, which we follow and will continue to follow, if the support of Parliament will not fail us. Quite different armaments would be needed, quite other financial sacrifices would have to be made, if, instead of following a peaceful policy and limiting ourselves to providing efficiently for our defence, we should venture upon an Imperialistic policy of vindication and conquest and should wish to be the knights errant of just causes throughout the world. This is why we cannot understand those who reproach us with the contradiction of an *armed peace*. The greatest contradiction is that of an *un-armed war*, and this is the contradiction of those who want a policy which leads to war without armaments.

There are some Deputies in this Chamber who are in favour of every vindication, who would wish to take up arms in defence of every nationality, and would even like to intervene in the affairs of other countries in favour of liberty. Evidently, they are inspired by the classical example of France, who wished to impose the principles of 1789 to all people, but they forget that France was fighting on the Sambre, on the Meuse, on the Rhine, in Italy and in Egypt with as many armies to impose these principles.

It is true that the Hon. Barzilai has declared that he would not refuse the means necessary for the defence of the country, but, independently from the fact that it has

been seen how the Hon. Barzilai and his friends have fulfilled this engagement when an occasion has presented itself, I will say that, even had they fulfilled it, it would not be enough.

It is not sufficient to distribute arms when the parties which have influence on the masses make a propaganda to depress the military spirit of the nation. When this spirit will have been weakened, it will be useless to distribute arms; you will have an armed *crowd*, not an *Army*. The moral strength of the Army is founded upon the spirit of abnegation and sacrifice, upon discipline, devotion to the King and to the Country. Woe to Italy upon the day when these sentiments should be even only weakened!

And notice that I am not speaking of the aberration of "Hervéism," which is fortunately rare among us, but of the constant manifestations against the military spirit, which, from the mildest form—such as the declaration I have heard in this Chamber by a Radical Deputy, that we should have fewer barracks and more schools, as if the State did not need the one as well as the other—go as far as the invitation of the Reformist Section of the Socialist Party to recruits to refuse to draw their ticket, teaching them to consider military service, not as a duty incumbent upon all citizens, but as a tyrannical and vexatious imposition.

Hon. Members! I have reached the end of what I had to say. It is in the solution of these great problems that all the importance of Parliamentary institutions is revealed. In this Hall meet all the currents of opinion which move the country. Some of them are pure, others turbid and muddy; but Parliamentary debate purifies them all. Well, gentlemen, I hope that the present one may have accomplished this purifying action: I

trust it may have led public opinion to more just and more serene appreciations, that it may be fruitful in teachings for the Government, the Country, for Parliament itself. I trust that through lively discussion it may have brought us together in the supreme thought of our common duty, in the interest of the Fatherland.

END OF PART FIRST





**PART SECOND**  
**EMIGRATION**



## PART SECOND

### EMIGRATION

#### I. SITTING OF FEBRUARY 20TH, 1904—(SENATE)

The protection of emigrants—The work of the Emigration Bureau  
—Three forms of State intervention—The question of Naturalization.

I now come to the second part of Senator Odescalchi's interpellation, that is to say, to the question of our free colonies.

I will not discuss emigration from the theoretical point of view, for this has been done many times already. Senator Odescalchi is right in attaching great importance to these free colonies and in saying that they prove most useful for the Mother Country. Without entering into their many advantages, there are two of these of such primary importance as to be evident to all. In the first place these free colonies to which our emigrants take the habits, the tendencies, the tastes and the remembrance of the Mother Country, constitute for us an excellent market, as our products follow them there; moreover, they are a precious element towards turning in our favour the scales of commercial activity, as every one knows that the numerous rivulets of gold which flow into Italy from her many free colonies have greatly contributed in the

last few years to render international exchanges favourable to us.

The Hon. Odescalchi, to my mind, has given too little importance to what constitutes at the present moment the essential part of the protection of emigrants ; he has said that " it matters little to provide for the emigrant when he leaves Italy and during his voyage ; what is important is to think of what he will do in the country to which he goes."

I cannot agree with this opinion, because I believe that the protection of the emigrant, as it has been established by the new Law, is something very valuable, and the results have shown that the dignity and good name of our country demanded that such provisions be made.

In the first place, it is essential to take care of the emigrant in the Italian provinces which he leaves, because it is the first step towards the vigilance which is to be exercised in the regions to which he goes. The new Law has put a check on the exploitation of emigrants by unscrupulous people, who, spreading misleading reports, sent them in flocks towards countries where they found themselves confronted by misery and starvation.

Therefore, this form of preventive protection answers precisely to the need of directing our emigrants to those regions where they can find profitable work ; it has proved itself beneficial and must be continued in any case. But humanity demands the protection of the emigrant during the voyage as well, to prevent rapacious speculators from transporting whole loads of them like herds of cattle, taking into no account the elementary rules of hygiene.

Now, the vigilance exercised by the Emigration Bureau has succeeded in eliminating a great many of the wrongful practices which were heretofore deplored. This does not

mean we should not think also of the other question to which Senator Odescalchi has alluded, that is to say, of considering what emigrants will do in the countries to which they go. It seems to me, however, that we are before a vast field of action and that, to cover the whole question, truly extraordinary resources would be necessary. I do not think it possible for the State to assume the responsibility of providing for the placing of all its emigrants in the countries to which they go ; evidently such an undertaking would be disproportionate and beyond the limits and intentions of the forces of the State, but this will not mean that, where it is possible, something on this line will not be done.

I, therefore, believe that the State may be able to very opportunely intervene by assisting and subsidizing the private enterprises which are directed towards the colonization of the new countries to which our emigration is directed, giving due preference to those where our emigrants are better treated.

With reference to this subject I have learnt from the reports of the Board of Emigration, which have been sent me, that the Hon. Odescalchi has taken part in the discussions held lately to examine the proposals of several companies for a scheme of colonization to be carried out in the Argentine Republic.

I have no difficulty in declaring that I follow this movement with the greatest sympathy, and am awaiting some definite proposals from the Board of Emigration and from the Committee of Parliamentary Vigilance to give my attention to this question.

The Argentine Republic is one of the States which have been preferred by our emigrants, so that to-day they form a noteworthy part of the population ; it is a State where they are received with pleasure and where, it must be

recognized, they are treated with greater humanity and justice than elsewhere, and, as the Argentine Government is willing on its part to associate itself to our action and to contribute also financially to the development within its territory of Italian colonization, negotiations are at present in course to co-ordinate our action with that of the Argentine Government.

I have noticed that the Board of Emigration has discussed three forms of State intervention: the guarantee of interest for the Company which should there invest its capital; the payment of a sum as a donation, or the concession of loans to colonists. There are naturally pros and cons for each of these three forms, which I shall in due time examine; but I may say at once that I have found just the objections made to the first two of them. The guarantee of interest, especially of an interest equal to that paid by the Public Debt, would take from the Company every spur to activity, because when people invest their money in a colonizing enterprise and the State guarantees a  $3\frac{1}{2}$  or 4 per cent. interest, it is equivalent to saying they may spare themselves any exertion, and the work to which such capital is devoted thus becomes a secondary matter.

I frankly declare I do not like this form of intervention and subvention; I should prefer in any case the intervention with a sum given as a donation—to be paid, however, when the results of the colonization should have been well ascertained; but I think the third form, that of loans to the colonists, is worthy of consideration, because it would solve one of the greatest difficulties, that is to say, the absence of financial means during the first years, in which the colonists must improve the land.

The Hon. Odescalchi has also raised another important question—that of naturalization. We have ever been in

the lead of nations in Private International Law, and Italy has always made the most praiseworthy efforts to obtain its codification. Truly inexplicable obstacles to this high scope are put forward by other nations, and, so far, it has been impossible on this account to accomplish it, although there is some hope for the future. Lectures in Private International Law are held periodically at the Hague among all the States, and I have already appointed a Commission of jurists that has invited the opinions of the Magistracy, of University professors, and of all those who occupy themselves with this question. The opinions thus given will be gathered together and the Government will send to the Hague its Representatives to endeavour to make them prevail.

There remain some other special questions, to which Senator Odescalchi has alluded, and which could hardly form part of a general international agreement, but rather of conventions with certain States, especially the South American ones, and I assure him I will give this matter my attention and the most careful consideration.

I believe thus to have answered the principal questions raised by Senator Odescalchi. He has justly remarked that at present international politics have gone beyond the limits of one continent and have become world politics, the principal factor of which is the economic one.

This is a very just observation and the Government has shown its understanding of it. On its part all that can possibly tend to foster commerce and exchanges will be the object of its greatest solicitude.

Allow me to say, however, that it is not enough to appeal to the Government. Senator Odescalchi has pointed out the example of other nations like Germany and England. Well, if our country does not want to remain behind, if it intends to compete with these nations

who have obtained the markets of the world, it will be necessary that to the action of the Government shall correspond in an efficient manner the energy of individual initiative.

## II. SITTING OF JULY 1ST, 1904—(SENATE)

The institution of "*emigration attachés*."—Formation of Italian colonies abroad—The two absolutely different aspects of Emigration in Italy.

I have little to say with reference to the protection of our emigrants abroad. Senator Paternó's opinion that this protection should first of all be vested in the State is perfectly just. The State, to my mind, according to the modern conception of its functions, should not be merely a negative quantity, but an institution for the spreading of culture, civilization and education; therefore, it cannot and should not renounce such an important task as the protection of emigration. This is why I have promoted and encouraged the institution of "*emigration attachés*," which is now beginning to operate by way of experiment, but to which I believe greater extension may be usefully given.

Still, while I accept the principle expounded by Senator Paternó with regard to the directive action of the State in this matter, I do not intend in any way to exclude the precious assistance which can be given to it by private initiative, which I believe is called upon to complete and integrate this action, which cannot of itself alone reach everywhere.

This said, I will answer briefly to the remarks made by Senator Odescalchi.

Senator Odescalchi, drawing our attention to the



conclusions of the Financial Commission, which have proved unfavourable to State colonies, has recalled the powerful assistance given to German emigration by the German free colonies of some American States, especially in Brazil, and, while noting that these colonies have arisen out of individual initiative, without the intervention, and, above all, without the material assistance of the State, he has declared that, Italian capital being more timid and private initiative in such matters weaker and less frequent, he thought it necessary that in Italy the State should intervene by doing something in the matter.

Now, when we leave the field of the protection of emigrants to enter into that of the formation of Italian colonies abroad, an important observation presents itself at once to our minds.

Emigration in Italy has two absolutely different aspects. There are some flourishing and wealthy provinces, in which agriculture and manufactures thrive, labour is plentiful, and the population superabundant; for these provinces emigration is, to use the expression so often heard, a *safety valve*, a useful outlet, which prevents serious social phenomena and disturbances from occurring.

But there are, unfortunately, other less thriving provinces, where manufactures are lacking, agriculture languishes, the population is thin and labour scarce. Now, in these provinces, against every reasonable prevision and for very complex causes, the phenomenon of emigration has begun to develop itself and, in fact, is taking ever greater proportions.

Some one has justly remarked that, had we the necessary means, before thinking of providing for our emigrants in the countries to which they go, it would

be advisable to consider, (and we have an example of this in the experiment made in Basilicata, of which we await the results), if it would not be wiser to spend more money at home, in order to prevent in these provinces the continuation and increase of emigration, which for those regions is not an index of prosperity, but of misery and impoverishment.

### III. SITTING OF MARCH 3RD, 1905—(SENATE)

Italian Emigration to North America—Mr. Carnegie's opinion of the Italian immigrant—Restrictive measures against Immigration—Proposed institution by Chief Immigration Commissioner Sargent and Senator Sherman of a Federal Information Office at Ellis Island—Results of the work of the "*emigration attachés*" in Europe—Vigilance exercised at the ports of sailing—Appointment of a medical officer belonging to the United States Navy in the port of Naples—Necessity of preventing congestion of immigrants in the seaports of the Atlantic and of directing Italian Emigration to the agricultural States of the South and of the Pacific Coast—Benevolent Societies for the protection of emigrants—The question of Naturalization—The question of Military Service.

The important and far-reaching subject dealt with by the Hon. Senator Odescalchi and the other speakers would lend itself to a long discussion ; but, while leaving aside the general questions to which they have alluded, and which could hardly be discussed in one sitting, I will deal more specially with the definite provisions upon which they have called my attention, and will dwell particularly upon that part of our emigration which has chiefly been discussed, that which goes to North America and is the most important, as it represents fully two-fifths of our total emigration. In a few years it has increased by one

hundred per cent., and in one year alone the number of Italians who have emigrated to North America has exceeded two hundred and fifty thousand.

The Hon. Odescalchi has alluded to some of the evils of our emigration to America ; to the misery of a great number of our emigrants, to the increase of criminality among them, due to ignorance and to the development of bad instincts, in consequence of which our colonists are not everywhere looked upon with favour ; in fact, the Italian emigrant is the one who in the United States finds himself specially at a disadvantage, as his work is paid less and he is treated worse than other immigrants.

Still, although this is true, I think the statement by Senator Odescalchi, who says that he has gathered from his trip to the United States the impression that Italian emigration to that country is considered undesirable, is somewhat exaggerated. Certainly there may be people who hold this opinion, but to prove there are many who think otherwise I will cite a well-known authority, Mr. Carnegie, who is known to all of us, and who recently wrote the following words :—

“ As the result of experience, I highly appreciate the Italian, and I consider him a desirable immigrant ; it is to him I look in the hope of colonizing the land of the Southern States, and I declare that, under certain conditions, the danger of Italian immigration is very imaginary.”

In America there is some concern for the constant increase of immigration ; it is not felt especially for Italians, however, but for immigrants from all nations. American workmen begin to see with disfavour the competition of immigrants, they are organizing themselves into Societies to resist it, to press upon the men in power and make their voice heard at electoral times ; therefore a

current of feeling is forming itself, not entirely hostile to immigration, but which tends to restrain and limit it.

The restrictive measures against immigration, of which some Senators have taken the initiative, are precisely the expression of this current of public opinion.

That this is a phenomenon which manifests itself everywhere has already been opportunely observed by Senator Fava. In some countries it has even taken a prohibitive form, as, for example, in Australia, which is governed by the Labour Party, that gives expression to those sentiments of universal brotherhood which are the outward show of a programme the substance of which is very different, by placing a ban upon the workers of all other nations.

The speakers in the present debate have demanded the efficient protection of our emigrants after they land in the United States. This is truly necessary, because as soon as these emigrants land, their misery and ignorance, and, above all, the absence of any knowledge of the language of the country, exposes them to become the prey of unscrupulous adventurers who plunder them.

The American Government itself has been impressed by this fact, because Chief Immigration Commissioner Sargent proposes in his last report the institution of a Federal Office of information at Ellis Island, which had already been proposed about one year ago in the Senate by Mr. Sherman.

This initiative of the American authorities must be welcomed with pleasure, because the action of foreign Governments in favour of their citizens in America must necessarily be unfolded with great prudence and delicacy. Senator Fava has justly remarked that any action of this kind is looked upon over there with diffidence and suspicion and, if not unfolded prudently, can, instead of

being of assistance, lead to a dangerous reaction. This is why, though I last year took the initiative of the institution of "*emigration attachés*," that is at present being worked out as an experiment and has already in a short time given excellent fruits, (as the two "*attachés*" who are in Switzerland and Germany have obtained in favour of our Italian workmen extraordinary results, especially in cases of accidents, in which, by themselves directing these men through the intricate and difficult local legal proceedings, they have been able to obtain for them substantial sums as damages, such as had never before been realized), still I have not judged it prudent—I do not say it may not be done in the future—to appoint as yet an "*emigration attaché*" in New York, because before doing so I would wish to be certain that he would be well received by local public opinion and by the American authorities. I have rather preferred to be generous in subsidies to those private societies for the Protection of Immigrants, the directing boards of which are formed both by Italian and American elements.

Senator Odescalchi has referred to the advisability of keeping a close watch upon emigration, in order that the presence of criminals should not continue to contaminate it; but the existing laws, as far as this goes, in conjunction with American Legislature, fully provide for. In fact, Americans themselves are watchful to prevent the landing of those who have been convicted of crime or who have the taint of insanity or of contagious disease upon them, and if by chance, in spite of this vigilance any of these should land, they are subsequently arrested and deported to Europe.

Therefore, the remark made by Senator Pierantoni, that we need not exercise any surveillance at the ports of sailing of our emigrants, is an observation which cannot

be the fruit of serious reflection, because, if we did not exercise this vigilance or did so less efficiently, we should only obtain the result that our emigrants would sail, but only to be refused admittance to the United States and shipped back to Italy.

So important is this fact that, inasmuch as regards the physical state of our emigrants, since the opinions and declarations of our Italian doctors were subsequently checked at the American ports of entry and often not confirmed, in agreement with the United States Government, a Health Office has been instituted in Naples, which is the general port of sailing, with a medical officer belonging to the American Navy. The result is that, in consequence of the examination of emigrants by this officer, we can almost assure them of the privilege of landing in America.

The Hon. Odescalchi justly pointed out the necessity of preventing the crowding of immigrants in the sea-ports of the Atlantic, and the advisability of directing Italian emigration to the agricultural States of the South and the Pacific coast. This is one of the subjects to which we have turned our attention, and, in fact, in order to come directly in touch with the firms which engage Italian labour, especially agricultural, in order to endeavour to organize in a rational manner the protection of our emigrants, we sent to America last year a travelling inspector, who remained in the country for some time and has presented an interesting Report, which concluded with some proposals directed towards rendering more efficient the protection of our emigration. This will be one of the first subjects to be taken up by the Board of Emigration, and as soon as I shall have heard its opinion I will make the necessary provision.

The question of education alluded to by Senator

Odescalchi is also serious ; still, the teaching of foreign languages in Italy, as Senator Pierantoni has justly remarked, might benefit the rich, but it will never be possible to obtain the diffusion of foreign languages among poor emigrants, a great number of whom are also illiterates.

In the fight against illiteracy a great deal has been done by the schools for adults, and for these the Minister of Public Instruction has granted fifty thousand liras a year to the Emigration Fund, which on its own account has devoted to the same purpose another five hundred thousand liras annually, so that this year a great number of these schools will be opened.

Senator Odescalchi has also spoken of the necessity of consolidating the various societies for the protection of emigrants. But this is a difficult matter. New York has three of these Societies : The "*Società degli Emigranti Italiani*," which is chiefly American, the "*Istituto Italiano di Beneficenza*," which is exclusively Italian; and the "*St. Raphael Society*," which is only a dependency of the missionaries of Monsignor Scalabrini. They are so different that their consolidation becomes impossible. If any unity of action is to be had, it can be obtained by the Ministry, which, by granting the subsidy, can place these societies under its control and make the subsidy itself subject to certain conditions. It is also true that the existence of several societies, instead of one only, in so great a centre as New York, answers better to the idea of the division of labour.

The question of naturalization has given occasion to an interesting debate in the Senate between the Hon. Odescalchi and Pierantoni, in which the different aspects of the question have been treated with great clearness and precision. But even this matter has been for years a subject of controversy, and if the Foreign Affairs Ministers

who have succeeded each other upon these benches have not found a way of solving the problem, and if the Hon. Odescalchi has to-day repeated things he already had said before the Senate in 1899, this certainly cannot be laid down to negligence or ill-will on the part of those who have preceded me in the important office I now hold, but to the intrinsic difficulties of the question, which I could not better explain than by reading to the Senate what an illustrious predecessor of mine, Senator Visconti Venosta, had occasion to say to Senator Odescalchi in the sitting of December 18th, 1899 :—

“ Practically, from the Italian point of view, the question presents itself as follows : our Civil Code establishes at Article 4 that the son of a father who is an Italian citizen is himself an Italian citizen, and at Article 11 it declares that, whoever has obtained naturalization in a foreign country loses his Italian citizenship. Therefore, the Italian subject who has fixed his residence in the United States finds himself confronted by this alternative : either to remain faithful to his nationality of origin and renounce those political and administrative rights which, in the great centres of emigration, would be the most efficient means of influence and protection of his interests ; or else to accept the nationality of the country he resides in, losing *de jure* and *de facto* his Italian citizenship.”

Now, since then the question has not advanced by one step. Inasmuch as regards the avoiding of possible conflict, negotiations have been opened with the Argentine Republic and the United States of America with the purpose of endeavouring to regulate by fixed rules all those cases which could give occasion to such conflict. After having reached a certain point, however, it has been impossible to proceed with these negotiations, on account of the manifest reluctance of those two States. In



order to satisfy Senator Odescalchi's aspirations on the subject of naturalization, it would be necessary to modify our Civil Code. It is a grave and arduous question, upon which I cannot commit myself; but, since it has been so often raised, I will have it examined by a Commission of Jurists and Sociologists acting in agreement with my colleague the Minister of Grace and Justice.

The question of military service has, perhaps, less importance than Senator Odescalchi has given to it, because, as Senator Fava has already mentioned, the law of 1901 has in a great measure solved it. In fact, by this law, a provisional dispensation from military service, which lasts for all the time of their residence abroad, is granted to all those who emigrate before their sixteenth year; and, if this residence is protracted beyond their thirty-fourth year, the dispensation becomes absolute.

Therefore, if anything were to be done, it would have to be for those who are not affected by the law of 1901, that is to say, for those who emigrate from Italy after their sixteenth year and before their twenty-first. For these I should have no difficulty in granting some facilities, so as to postpone their military service to their twenty-fourth year of age. I find some reluctance to the granting of further facilities on the part of my colleague the Minister of War, so that, on this subject as well, I cannot give a final and conclusive answer without having come to an understanding with him.

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### IV. SITTING OF JUNE 15TH, 1905—(SENATE)

The two different aspects of Italian Emigration: from provinces thickly populated and from those where population is scarce—Comparisons with other States—Senator Lodge and his Bill against Immigration—Italian Ambassador to Washington's visit to agricultural States.

I now come to the weighty question of our emigration, which has given occasion to the expression of so many important considerations.

All the speakers have touched upon this subject, but the one who has done so more at length has been the Hon. di San Giuliano. First of all, he must allow me to uphold a conviction of mine in which he finds he cannot agree. I have had occasion to speak at other times before the Senate upon the question of Italian emigration to Argentina and to the United States, in answer to some interpellations by the Hon. Odescalchi. I then expressed the conviction to which the Hon. di San Giuliano thinks he cannot associate himself. I made a distinction between the emigration from our wealthy and populous provinces, for which it is an economic advantage and a social safety valve, and that which leaves poorer provinces, where the population is scarce and where emigration is only a consequence of poverty and a cause of still greater impoverishment.

The Hon. di San Giuliano has said that, to his mind, emigration is always useful, be it from provinces thick with population, be it from those where population is scarce; but I can point out to him that, while the average density of population in Italy is

115 per square kilometer, in Basilicata it is only 46. Sardinia alone has an even more sparse population, with only 33 inhabitants per square kilometer, and is in this respect inferior to all the States of Europe except European Russia, which has vast and very thinly populated territories, which bring her average density of population down to 20 inhabitants per square kilometer.

Now, it is evident that in Basilicata continued emigration will lead to absolute depopulation, and the general complaint of the landowners in that region—which has been brought up in Parliament during the discussion of the provisions for Basilicata—is that if emigration were to continue at the present rate it would lead to an absolute lack of hands for agriculture.

It is true, as the Hon. di San Giuliano has remarked, that these people do not leave their native land out of desire for novelty and travel, but that there is an economic reason which drives them away, that is to say, the miserable economic conditions of those regions and the hope of finding better ones elsewhere. But this only goes to support the idea I expressed when, though approving on general lines the projected contribution to colonization in foreign countries, I said we have first of all a supreme interest and a sacred duty, that of placing these provinces of ours in such economic conditions as to not drive away the few inhabitants who still remain there.

I think that upon this point the Hon. di San Giuliano cannot fail to agree with me. If it may be useful to provide that the Italians who emigrate organize themselves in prosperous colonies abroad, it is necessary, first of all, to take measures by which the regions from which they emigrate may rise to better conditions. This is true, not only of that one region but of many others in Italy; our emigration has taken such extensive proportions,

not merely on account of the density of our population, but also in many cases because of the difficult economic conditions in which the people find themselves. Let the country prosper, let the national wealth increase, let manufactures flourish and labour find sure and adequate compensation, and you will see emigration decrease.

In support of this theory it is very important to note that other States, with a density of population much greater than ours, have a much smaller emigration, which, instead of increasing as time goes on, is in constant decrease. Belgium, for instance—with a density of 227 inhabitants per square kilometer instead of our 115—has very little emigration, and this is due to the great development attained in that country by agriculture and manufactures. Germany, which approaches our density of population with 104 inhabitants per square kilometer, has at present an emigration of only 30,000 a year to the 200,000 it had in 1885. This will show you what a powerful corrective of emigration the improved conditions of our country would be.

I have already said I will not return to the subject of our emigration in the United States of America, of which the Hon. di San Giuliano has made a most acute analysis, in which I in a great measure agree. He has justly observed that the aversion which manifests itself in America for our emigration is not without a reason, and what he has said may also serve to correct the impression made by a remark from Senator Vigoni, who has asked me purely and simply to prevent the United States from taking restrictive measures.

Now, Hon. Vigoni, in this question, as well as in those of commercial protection, of salaries and of labour legislation generally, each State acts according to its own interests. There is only one way of preventing the

enactment of restrictive measures against Italian immigration, and that is, by avoiding that it should assume the shape of a menace to American economic interests.

Senator Lodge, who is considered one of the men who most strenuously oppose Italian immigration in America and who has brought before the Senate a very strong Bill to increase even more the difficulties and restrictions for the admission of immigrants, was recently in Rome. I had the opportunity of speaking with him and tried to point out that our industrious and sober emigrant should be welcomed and not rejected by the United States ; and he answered that he was not especially opposed to *Italian* immigration, but only on general lines he was contrary to immigration coming from any State in such numbers as to produce heavy agglomerations in the large cities.

The Hon. di San Giuliano has opportunely cited the instance of the Italian colony of New York with four hundred thousand inhabitants almost exclusively centred in one quarter of the city, and he has also wisely observed that the restrictions which America places with reference to the conditions of health, precedents of good behaviour, etc., of our emigrants are directed towards not unduly increasing their numbers detrimentally to the American nationality.

Senator Lodge remarked he would be favourable to Italian immigration if, instead of stagnating in the large cities, it were to be directed to the agricultural States.

The Hon. di San Giuliano has pointed out the difficulties of directing these streams of emigration to the west. I think he has been excessively pessimistic as to the possibility of directing them to the south and south-west. Our Ambassador has recently undertaken a trip to those regions to make a close study of them and has everywhere been received with great honours. At

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Austin, for instance, he was admitted to speak before the assembled State Legislature, an honour which could not be greater, and he spoke of the opportunity of Italian immigration and found applauding hearers. He expressed above all a very just idea, that is to say, that the Italian emigrant should not be considered as a possible substitute for negro or Mexican labour, but as a civilized labourer, with a sentiment of dignity worthy of placing him on the same level as the American labourer.

And if it is true that at present the extensive cultivation of the immense prairies, which require few workers, does not attract the emigrant, it is also true that in course of time in those regions cultivation will be intensified and will, therefore, need a greater number of hands. In any case it is the only outlet in which we can hope, and we should fail to our most elementary duty if we did not study this question with every attention and did not make every effort towards directing our emigrants to those regions.

### V. SITTINGS OF JUNE 21ST AND 26TH, 1905—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

The effects of the development of manufactures and agriculture on Emigration—Diffidence with which Italian Immigration is regarded in the United States and the prohibitive measures threatened—Senator Lodge's explanation of this attitude—The influence of immigrants in general upon the political atmosphere of the United States, owing to their congestion in the large cities—The Italian Ambassador to Washington's welcome in the agricultural States—The principles which inspire the Italian Emigration Law and the action of the "*emigration attachés*"—The Hon. Colajanni's proposal for increasing the number of Italian schools for Italian emigrants abroad.

The Hon. Nitti, speaking of Italian emigration in relation to our density of population, has tried to contest

the assertion that a greater development of manufactures and agriculture could have the effect of a check upon our emigration. But, as I have already said, emigration in Italy is not the consequence of density of population alone and is not in direct relation to it, as it takes place in the northern provinces, where the density of population is very great, as well as in Basilicata, where on an average it is barely higher than that of Russia. Evidently, therefore, this phenomenon is less simple than it appears to the Hon. Nitti.

It is also incorrect to assert that it may not be checked by intensifying our manufactures and agriculture; because, as the Hon. Colajanni has justly remarked, by this very means the emigration from Germany has gone down from almost three hundred thousand emigrants yearly to about twenty thousand. But we have the other example of Belgium, a country most thickly populated, with agriculture and manufactures highly developed, where emigration has never had occasion to decrease; because it has always been very scarce.

This shows how difficult these problems are and how cautious one should be in expressing opinions upon the subject. And I think that this problem, better than any other, shows us that in social science, to the contrary of what is the case in natural science, it is most difficult to come to definite conclusions, because when you think you have weighed and valued all the elements which constitute a social phenomenon; it is always possible to find that one has overlooked some consideration which is not devoid of importance.

Several speakers have touched upon the question of our emigration to the United States of America, of the diffidence with which it is regarded in certain circles and of the prohibitive measures which are threatened. One

must recognize, however, that these measures would not aim at entirely eliminating Italian immigration, but at giving to it a different aspect than it at present has. It has been opportunely recalled that the Italians in the city of New York form a city to themselves with over four hundred thousand inhabitants. Now, it is precisely this extraordinary and excessive agglomeration of Italians in the great cities that the Americans object to. And, since the Hon. Nitti has mentioned the political vote as one of the elements of influence for our emigration in the countries towards which it flows, I beg him to consider that Senator Lodge, who presented the Bill for the rejection of illiterates, and with whom I had occasion to speak recently in Rome, told me explicitly that one of the reasons for which many American political men look with disfavour upon the Italian immigrants massed together in the large cities, is precisely because at election times they become the easy prey of cheap politicians and, therefore, disturb the political atmosphere of the country. But Senator Lodge told me as well what many of his countrymen think we also should wish, that is to say, that Italian emigration, which has so far flown into the great city centres, should be directed instead towards the agricultural States. And everyone knows, since also the papers have spoken of it, that our Ambassador at Washington, at the Italian Government's special request, visited the southern and south-western territories, especially in Texas and Arkansas, to study if it would be possible to direct our emigrants to those regions ; and I am happy to tell the Chamber that he has been given everywhere a hearty welcome and in some States has even been admitted to the honours of the Legislature, that is to say, to speak before the assembled House of elected Representatives.

His words in favour of Italian immigration were



welcomed with applause, and he received everywhere encouragement. I believe, therefore, that when this question is seriously taken up by us, we shall not fail to come to a practical and satisfactory solution.

The Hon. Celesia, like the Hon. Fiamberti and, in a measure, the Hon. Nitti also, finds that several of the provisions of our Emigration Law are inspired by excessively protectionist principles, that is to say, that they carry to a point which would seem to them excessive the action of the State. I do not deny that some of their considerations are worthy of examination. I must say, however, that in its fundamental principles the Emigration Law deserves to be maintained, because this very protection and action of the State has been most advantageous to our emigrants and has done away with a lot of abusive practices and drawbacks which were heretofore deplored, and the gratitude of the nation to those who, with true spirit of abnegation, devoted themselves to the triumph of these principles and were the promoters of the actual Law, will never be too great.

The Hon. Cabrini has very justly praised our "*emigration attachés*." I must associate myself with his words and recognize that this experiment has been entirely successful. The two "*attachés*" whom we have appointed in Switzerland and Germany have proved of great assistance to emigrants, especially in the settlement of the numerous claims to damages for accidents to working men. I fully concur in the Hon. Cabrini's idea that the action of the "*emigration attachés*" should be both an action of assistance and an action directed towards bringing to the knowledge of intending emigrants, before they leave the Mother Country, the conditions of the labour centres for which they are bound.

The Hon. Artom has justly spoken of the difficulty

encountered in the protection of our emigrants in the United States of America, on account of that diffidence which the American authorities and citizens feel for all that may have the appearance of interference on the part of a foreign State. Apropos of this, I will say that, if the Chamber will grant the increase of funds I have asked for the appointment of two more "*emigration attachés*," I should propose sending one of them to the United States and the other to South America; but I will consider it advisable to give these two *attachés* a different official character to that of the other two who reside in European States; because, while in Switzerland and Germany it is accepted without comment, and it is even judged advisable, that these *attachés* should have a distinct mission from that of our Consuls in order to be more free in their action, it is on the contrary absolutely indispensable that in both North and South America they should be given the character of Consular Agents, since, were it otherwise, their action with the local authorities would be devoid of any prestige and their efforts would remain fruitless.

The Hon. Colajanni has proposed the voting of a sum of two hundred thousand liras, to be devoted to the increase in the number of Italian schools in those countries to which our emigrants flock in greater numbers. I declare I shall willingly accept this amendment, because I consider such an enterprise highly patriotic and useful.

It must be the object of our greatest care to foster in distant lands the continued study and use of the Italian tongue among our countrymen, in order to avoid being confronted by the painful phenomenon which has taken place in some regions, where after two generations of life abroad our emigrants are still Italians, but the Italian language has ceased to exist among them.

## VI. SITTING OF MAY 15TH, 1907—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

Contradictory opinions on Emigration—Defence of the American Magistracy—The legal protection of emigrants and the action of the Italian Consuls.

In this matter of emigration it is truly a case of saying : *tot capita, tot sententiae*. I have had occasion to confer for my enlightenment and instruction with the most competent men upon this subject ; well, I have never found two of them agreeing in the same opinion or favouring the same proposals.

There are those who believe emigration to be desirable, others who would wish to prevent it ; some who believe in the efficacy of the means apt to restrain it, others who fear that any such provision would only have the effect of increasing clandestine emigration ; some who would wish to direct our emigrants to the North American continent, others who prefer South America ; some who would centre emigration in the cities, others who would urge it to flock to the still unexplored regions where there are vast tracts of land to redeem and important public works to be undertaken ; others again who, like the Hon. Materi, fear dangers and snares for our emigrants in the latter regions.

Answering briefly to the Hon. Materi, I must first of all express my regret and disapproval of the words he has pronounced in criticizing the American Magistracy. The latter probably has its faults as has that of all other countries, but certainly, if an American were to criticize our own Magistracy in the terms used by the Hon. Materi, our national pride would have a right to resent it. As Minister for Foreign Affairs, while naturally leaving the

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Hon. Materi full liberty of opinion, as is his right, I cannot fail to express regret at the too strong words he has used. He has deplored true evils and serious wrongs which exist in the United States of America to the damage of our emigrants and has mentioned the action of the bosses, who, as soon as our emigrants land, try to monopolize them, and, taking advantage of their ignorance and need, to make them an instrument of unscrupulous profit. He has recalled the abuses of peonage and certain clauses of the labour contracts which are really and truly snares. And, so far, he is right. But where the Hon. Materi has evidently overstepped the mark is when he has declared that no one has troubled or troubles about this matter. The Hon. Materi should be better informed than anyone else, because he belongs to the Board of Emigration, which gives me efficient aid in endeavouring to prevent, as far as possible, these evils.

The Hon. Materi has said with great truth that it is very difficult to obtain redress at law, because a law-suit costs a great deal of money. This is why, in all cases in which we have reason to believe that an emigrant has been the victim of injustice or overbearance, in order that he may validly set forth his reasons and obtain legal redress, we pay the expenses of the necessary law-suit. This is the only course we have at our disposal, a course which we are able to follow, thanks to the prosperous state of the Budget for Emigration. Our Consuls choose able lawyers, pay them well, and thus our destitute emigrants find the legal protection to which they are entitled.

As to the Consuls themselves, for goodness sake let us be careful in our criticisms. Even the Board of Emigration has had to recognize the difficulties under which they labour. I have asked a few of our Consuls in America,

who were passing through Rome, to appear before the Board of Emigration to be questioned and to answer in person to all criticisms, and I remember having seen last year the official report of one of these sittings of the Board, at which our New Orleans Consul was heard.

He has under his jurisdiction a region which is as large as the whole of Italy. Now, then, how can it be demanded of him that he should know everything that happens, even at the far end of this region, and how can we expect that, as soon as he becomes acquainted with an event in which some of our countrymen are involved he should *always* be able to hasten personally to the spot? The only remedy is that which has been universally encouraged by all and approved by the Chamber, that is to say, the appointment of "*emigration attachés*."

In North America we have only just begun, and we must send others, because our Consuls cannot absolutely, with the smallness of the means at their disposal and the vastness of the districts under their jurisdiction, provide adequately in all cases. I propose, therefore, to increase the number of the "*emigration attachés*," and I am sure the Chamber will be willing to follow me in this direction.

I have already pointed out in a previous discussion that it is necessary in this matter to proceed with great caution, because, if our "*emigration attachés*" in America were not vested with Consular powers, they would be faced by great difficulties. What have I then done? All are acquainted with the evils which have been deplored in the case of the Italians who have gone to work on the Panama Canal. Well, acting in agreement with the Board of Emigration, I have sent there on a special mission Dr. Lo Monaco, but, in order to give him the necessary powers and that *prestige* which were indispensable for the discharge of his mission, I have temporarily vested

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him with the character and attributions of a Consular Agent ; and this is how I mean to proceed in the future.

These few remarks will be sufficient, I think, to convince the Chamber that I take an active interest in this problem and that, among the many advices and suggestions I receive, I try to choose the most practical and those which may really lead to useful results.

The Hon. Materi has spoken of the enrolment of whole families of workers for America, which, he says, is practised on a large scale. But he knows that such enrolments of whole families cannot be carried out in Italy without the permission of the General Emigration Bureau, which has the habit of accurately examining the conditions of the localities and of the works to be undertaken and to gather information as to what these emigrants will find in the countries to which it is proposed to take them, and is always very reluctant in giving its approval. The Hon. Materi, who is a member of the Board of Emigration, must know of many instances in which requests of enrolment of whole families of Italian emigrants have been refused, because the necessary guarantees were lacking. In each of these cases, either the salaries were deemed inadequate, or the region to which the emigrants were to be conducted was considered unhealthy, or it was held that the parties who were to enrol these families did not give sufficient guarantees of that seriousness and integrity which are indispensable in such cases.

I believe these frank declarations will satisfy everyone. This is a subject of great national interest ; we must all join in order to prevent and mitigate the evils which are deplored and to solve this weighty and difficult problem.

## VII. SITTING OF DECEMBER 4TH, 1907—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

The remittances from Italian emigrants—The “*Banco di Napoli*” (Bank of Naples) and private banks and brokers—The question of Naturalization.

The Hon. Morpurgo has devoted the first part of his speech to the question of remittances from our emigrants, and he has pointed out that some of the provisions and precautions which have been taken for the transmission of the savings of emigrants through the “*Banco di Napoli*” (Bank of Naples), have had the effect of lessening the number of applicants who avail themselves of this official bank and to increase instead the number of those who direct themselves for this purpose to private banks and private brokers. He has pointed out that the remittances transmitted through the “*Banco di Napoli*” which fall under what is called the *first category* have decreased by fourteen million liras; those which fall under the *second category* have increased by six millions, leaving a net decrease, therefore, of eight million liras. He lays this down chiefly to two causes: the introduction by the bank of the compulsory form of Money Order and the commission charged for this service. He points out that emigrants avail themselves rather of private banks, either because the latter often make use of the “*insured letter service*,” thus sending the money in bank-notes, or because they give a duplicate of the Money Order to the sender, or because they renounce all commission.

Now the Money Order question is one of those upon which there is much discussion and it would be out of place to take it up in this Chamber. The fact remains, however, that all the men who are competent in financial matters and have occupied themselves with this question

have concluded that it is the only really safe medium for the transmission of the savings of the emigrants to their destination.

As to the commission charged, there is a disagreement between the Hon. Morpurgo's affirmations and those of Commendatore Nicola Miraglia, the President of the "*Banco di Napoli*," since the latter declares that private bankers also make a charge for their commission and a heavier one, as, were there no profit in this business for them, they would have no interest in competing with the Bank of Naples.

In answer to this, the Hon. Morpurgo remarks that such may be the case in the United States, but that he knows for a fact that in South America private bankers take no commission. Great as is the authority of our distinguished colleague, it seems to me we should rely implicitly upon the affirmation of the President of the Bank of Naples, Commendatore Miraglia, because, evidently, these private banks and private brokers who offer their services for the transmission of the emigrants' savings to the Mother Country do not do so out of patriotism, but in order to gain a profit from this service. This profit may be hidden, masked, and the credulous and ignorant emigrant may be led to believe that the sum of the Money Order he is sending does not cover any commission. He may thus be convinced that he is sending his money free of charge, but this is only a shift, for in reality he is spending certainly more than what it would cost him to avail himself of the "*Banco di Napoli*."

The fact is that, through the endeavours of the General Emigration Bureau, the Money Order is becoming more popular, and even the slow minds of these ignorant emigrants are beginning to open themselves to enlightenment. The Inspectors of the General Emigration Bureau



have made a real propaganda in favour of it, and we must be glad of the results obtained ; but the road we have yet to travel is a long one. It is really and truly a work of instruction and propaganda to which the men who are entrusted with it devote themselves with true spirit of abnegation and sacrifice.

The Hon. Fiamberti would wish me to find a way of preventing Italians who go abroad from becoming foreign subjects. Here also we find ourselves in the presence of absolutely contradictory opinions. A few months ago the Hon. Nitti came here to say : “ Hon. Minister, find some way of making it easier for our emigrants to become foreign subjects, because by acquiring this foreign citizenship they will have a right to vote, will gain influence, and our colonies will acquire greater importance.”

Now, the matter really stands like this : the Italian Government must neither urge nor dissuade Italians who are abroad from acquiring foreign citizenships. One thing it *can* do, which has been justly demanded for some time and which will be provided for by the new Law, and that is, to facilitate the re-acquisition of Italian citizenship for those who have lost it by becoming foreign subjects and to modify those very severe regulations of our Civil Code, by which the re-instatement in the rights of Italian citizenship has so far been almost an impossibility.

#### VIII. SITTING OF MARCH 20TH, 1908—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

Conditions of agriculture in the southern States of the North American Confederation—Suggestions by the Italian Ambassador to Washington after his trip to Texas.

The Hon. Member who has presented this Report, in speaking of the conditions of agriculture in the southern

States of the North American Confederation, has said that the provisions and proposals made by our Ambassador at Washington two years ago, after his trip to Texas, have proved fallacious.

Our Ambassador at Washington, after his trip to Texas, considered it advisable to not artificially encourage emigration to those regions, but only to endeavour to direct towards them the stream of emigration flowing constantly into the city of New York and stagnating there or in other large centres. Even then our Ambassador opportunely expressed the opinion that in the southern agricultural States, and especially in Texas, our emigrants should seek to create agricultural centres forming Italian colonies. Otherwise I do not believe that an Italian emigration to those agricultural States is possible.

In fact, even at present, in the southern States of the American Union, although there is a diminution of salaries which is held to vary from 10 to 15 per cent., still there is always a demand for agricultural labourers. But the Italian peasant is not adapted for isolated work; this is why landowners prefer Anglo-Saxon labourers. The Italian peasant, who goes to those regions, ignorant of the language and of the local agricultural systems, is necessarily less efficient; therefore, I believe it would be possible to direct our emigrants to them only by forming large centres, real Italian agricultural colonies.

#### IX. SITTING OF JUNE 7TH, 1909—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

The absence of social legislation in the United States in connection with accidents to working men—The famous Maiorano Case against the Baltimore and Ohio Railway Co.—Sentence by the Court of Pennsylvania and appeal to the United States Supreme Court—The decision of the Supreme Court and its violation of

the Treaty of November 18th, 1871, between Italy and the United States—Bearing of the sentence—The impossibility of an appeal to the Court of Claims—Is arbitration possible following upon the Arbitration Treaty of 1908 between Italy and the United States?—Suggested stipulation of an additional article to Treaty of 1871—The condition of Italian workmen in the United States—Increase in number of Consulates demanded for a more efficient protection of Italian emigrants—The Italian *Legal Bureaus* and the special fund for legal assistance to emigrants—The Mononkah disaster and the action of our Consul at Philadelphia.

It is well that so important a question as that raised by the Hon. Luciani should be discussed in to-day's sitting. It is a most interesting and complex juridical question, which deserves to be studied under all its aspects.

It is known that in the United States there does not exist a real and proper social legislation, such as we understand it. There is not an Insurance Law, nor any special legislation for accidents to working men. Therefore, in case of any harm coming to them, caused by violence or negligence, the damages therefor have to be established according to the rules of Common Law, by which any man or company guilty of violence or negligence against a third party is responsible towards the latter for damages, when this guilt can be proved by the claimant.

As the Hon. Luciani has recalled in the course of his interpellation, the Court of Pennsylvania, in deciding upon the claim filed by the widow of Maiorano against the Baltimore and Ohio Railway Company, declared that the relatives of the victims of accidents caused by illegal violence or negligence *residing abroad* were not entitled to bring any action in the United States Courts directed towards proving the responsibilities incurred and establishing the assessment of damages.

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Our Legal Bureau in Philadelphia saw at once how harmful such a decision would be for the interest of the numerous Italian workmen employed in the Pennsylvania mines or in the construction of buildings or railways, employments which are already dangerous in themselves and are rendered more so by the deficiency of safety appliances and of methods of prevention ; therefore, acting in agreement with our General Emigration Bureau, it appealed to the Federal Supreme Court in Washington, claiming that the law of Pennsylvania had been illegally applied and that, in any case, the Treaty of November 18th, 1871, between Italy and the United States had been violated.

The Supreme Court, by a sentence of April 5th, 1909, rejected this appeal. The Hon. Luciani has read almost the whole text of the sentence, commenting upon it, so I will refrain from going through it afresh. But, in order to bring light upon this most important question, I will briefly examine three points ; first, the bearing and importance of the sentence of the Supreme Court ; second, if it has been a just sentence ; third, not being such, in what way could its effects be remedied ?

First of all we must bear in mind the fact that the right of foreigners, who do not reside in the United States, to obtain damages for the death of a relative, due to the violence or negligence of others, has been recognized in all the States of the Union except Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Washington.

The sentence of the Supreme Court in the *Maiorano* Case means that the decision of these three States is not annulled by the treaty with Italy, but it has no bearing upon the question in all the other States of the American Union. The harmful effects of this decision, therefore, remain circumscribed to those three States only.

As to the bearing of this sentence it is very great, because we must consider the authority and importance of the Federal Supreme Court, which is above the Executive, the Judiciary, and even the Legislative power, since it may not only annul the laws when it holds them to be contrary to the Constitution, but by the Constitution itself is entrusted with the special task of making a close study of national legislation with regard to international treaties.

In spite of all this and without failing in the great respect due to the Supreme Court of the United States, in which sit the most eminent jurists of the nation, I am entirely of the Hon. Luciani's opinion that, in this particular case, its sentence has been unjust and that it constitutes a violation of Articles 2, 3, and 23 of our treaty with the United States.

There is no doubt that the refusal to pay damages to the relatives residing in Italy of an Italian killed by accident in the United States violates the treaty as it would be violated by the refusal of damages to the relatives residing in America of an American killed by accident in Italy.

What remedy can there be to this state of affairs? The *Court of Claims*? I do not think so; because this Court has been instituted for a very special purpose, that of passing judgment upon the damages and indemnities claimed from the Federal Government. Now, in the Maiorano Case the indemnity was not demanded from the Federal Government, but from a private company, therefore, the *Court of Claims* would not be competent to pass judgment upon it. Moreover, it is inferior to the Supreme Court and it is impossible to appeal from a higher tribunal to a lower one. Any possibility of redress in this direction must, therefore, in my opinion, be excluded.

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Is arbitration possible, in view of the Arbitration Treaty of 1908 existing between Italy and the United States ?

Here it is important to make a distinction. It does not seem possible to me to submit to arbitration the special Maiorano Case, because, in the interpretation of treaties the Federal Government would have no way of modifying any single and special decision of the Supreme Court, even were it to recognize its injustice, as the Court wields an authority superior to that of the Government itself.

Besides, I do not know if the Hague Tribunal can be used as a Court of Appeal against the Magistracy of single States of the American Union. It would be a case of annulling a sentence, and, to my mind, under this form arbitration would be refused, as it would be against the Constitution of the United States, and we cannot ask any Government to take an action which is contrary to its own Constitution.

It seems to me, however, that if the special Maiorano Case cannot be submitted to the Hague Tribunal, we might very well submit to it the general question of the limits of the Treaty of 1871 and of its application to the Italians residing in Italy.

Still, we must bear in mind that, according to the terms of our treaty of arbitration with the United States, the undertaking which in each single case determines the object of contention and the powers of the arbiters, must be approved by the Senate.

Supposing we were to obtain arbitration and that it were to prove favourable to our point of view, it would be necessary to embody this decision in a special additional Article to the Treaty of 1871, since the American Government would have no way of binding the Supreme Court to a different interpretation of the Treaty of 1871 than the

one it has already given, and a new clause would have, therefore, to be stipulated.

Now, it is precisely this side of the question that I have taken up and I hope that the American Government, convinced by the evident justice of our reasons, may be willing to consent to the stipulation of this additional Article, even without being compelled to do so by arbitration, and I entertain this hope, because several voices have already been raised in America itself to this effect. I will mention, for instance, that a New York paper has published in these days a letter addressed to the Secretary of State by a distinguished Pottsville lawyer, in which he criticizes the sentence of the Supreme Court, pointing out that, in virtue of the principle of reciprocity, the widows and children of Americans who should be the victims of accidents in Europe, should not be admitted to claim any damages. Mr. Wilhelm, the writer of the letter, makes an appeal in favour of this principle of reciprocity, recalling the great numbers of Americans who come to the Old World, and he invites the American Government not to wait for any solicitation from the Italian Government, but itself to take the initiative in this matter.

I am taking up the question in this sense, and have started an exchange of views with the other European States, who are also greatly interested in this question, because all of them, in greater or lesser degree, have emigrants who work and citizens who travel in the United States.

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I will not return to the question of the Supreme Court at Washington, upon which I think I have said enough, especially as the Hon. Pietravallo has himself observed that his interpellation regards a much more

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vast and complex field and not exclusively a juridical question.

The condition of the workmen who labour in the United States is a difficult one, but above all for the reasons I have already pointed out in my answer to the Hon. Luciani, that is to say, for the absence of social legislation, of appropriate laws for accidents, and of a special insurance of workers against them. We have had occasion to see in Italy the difficulties arising from the application of Common Law to the assessment of damages, when the claimant had to himself undertake the task of legally proving the company's guilt. This was equivalent in most cases, owing to the difficulty of obtaining this proof, to failure in securing the indemnity.

Nor is there any hope at present of a change in this respect in the United States, because social legislation is, at least in a great measure, regulated by each single State within its own territory, nor could the Federal Government interfere without altering the Constitution. This right of each single State creates special difficulties to the enactment of social legislation of the kind we are speaking of, because even those States who might recognize the need of it and would be favourable to its enactment fear, should they do so, that industrial companies might leave that State for a neighbouring one, where such legislation did not exist and where, consequently, they could quietly do as they pleased.

Therefore, I agree with what the Hon. Pietravallo has said as to the difficult conditions of the workers employed in the mines or manufactures of the United States, but I find he is mistaken in his declaration that Italians are "*at the ban*" of Common Law and of the rights of people. No, in the United States there is a Common Law which is equal for all, but in this special



matter it does not sufficiently protect either Italians; or other foreigners, or Americans themselves, who, in dealing with industrial companies, find themselves in the same conditions, that is to say, in the impossibility, in most cases, of obtaining damages.

There is, it is true, a condition of inferiority with regard to Italians, to which the Hon. Pietravalle has alluded ; it does not derive, however, from the legislation of the United States, but rather from the smaller degree of education of the Italian workmen as compared to others, and, above all, from the little knowledge they have of the language.

Among the various reports of our Consuls, I have found one which tells of an Italian workman, who, having through accident become disabled for work and, being questioned, was unable to tell either the name of the place where the accident had happened, nor that of the company which had employed him ; every investigation in his favour, therefore, had been impossible.

Moreover, in many cases, our workers do not apply to our Consuls, and often after having applied they have subsequently returned to them, asking them to desist from the action they had undertaken in their favour.

Certainly, in order to obtain greater protection it would be necessary to increase the number of our Consulates ; because it is not only the circumscription of the Consulate of Denver, mentioned by the Hon. Pietravalle, which is too extensive, there is also the Consulate of New Orleans which has jurisdiction over a district the size of the whole of Italy. We shall provide for this by the Consular Reform Bill, which is ready, and which I will submit to Parliament in November.

The fundamental point of these reforms will be to increase the number of our Consuls, to provide more

adequately for their needs, and to await their action. At present each Consul disposes of a fund of 2000 liras to employ in the assistance of injured workmen ; besides this, our Embassy at Washington has a fund of 50,000 liras for the same purpose. This is for ordinary cases, as in every extraordinary emergency the General Emigration Bureau is always ready to give its support with special grants.

Moreover, for the legal assistance of our emigrants, which does not only comprise the assistance of the workmen who have been the victims of accidents, but also all the questions of inheritance and succession, in which it has been possible to eliminate many of the abuses justly condemned by the Hon. Pietravalle, a sum of 270,000 liras, which may be gradually increased, has this year been set aside in the Budget for Emigration.

With part of this fund two Legal Bureaus for the protection of our emigrants are to-day already completely established, one in New York, the other in Philadelphia. In order to not unduly lengthen my speech, I will not go into all the useful work done by these Bureaus, by which they have well deserved the gratitude of our emigrants, because the results of this work are stated in detail in the Report by the General Emigration Bureau which I submitted to Parliament a few days ago. I will only say that it is my intention to persevere along this line, and, in fact, the necessary steps are being taken for the establishment of three other Legal Bureaus at Chicago, at Denver, and at San Francisco.

As to the Mononkah disaster, our Consul at Philadelphia and our Consular Agent at Fermont acted with the greatest promptness and zeal, both by taking the necessary measures to insure the safety of the property of the victims of that dreadful disaster and by trying to obtain the payment of damages in their favour.

How difficult the latter task was is shown by the perusal of the verdict given by the local judiciary authority ; it affirms that the explosion was caused by the spontaneous combustion of the coal-dust, which set fire to the gases accumulated in the mine, and therefore, the Company having strictly observed all the regulations of the State of West Virginia, the verdict concluded absolving it from any responsibility in the disaster.

It is easy to understand after a similar verdict, what difficulty there would be in obtaining any kind of indemnity. Still, our Consul did not give up ; he refused a first inadequate offer by the Company, and was finally able, through his own personal efforts, to obtain a satisfactory settlement of the claims of the Italian victims in America, also a sum of 127,000 Italian lires for the families of the victims residing in Italy. To show how difficult it would have been to obtain this result in any other way, it is enough to say that all the lawyers who were consulted, after having read the verdict of the inquest, refused to undertake the suit, and the only one who offered to do so made the condition that he should receive 35 per cent. of the damages which might be forthcoming. Therefore, in this case the personal endeavour and efforts of our Consul, who succeeded in obtaining for the Italian victims damages which it would have been impossible to secure in any other way, are worthy of every praise and commendation.

I believe these explanations will satisfy the Hon. Pietravalle ; certainly there are many evils still to be deplored. What has been done is little compared to what remains to be done, but do what we may, there are some insurmountable difficulties arising from the internal legislation of the United States, to remove which our zeal and goodwill are not sufficient.

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What we can do is to intensify the action of our Consuls, to increase their number as well as that of the emigration inspectors and *attachés*, so that, instead of residing permanently in a given locality, they may go wherever there are important numbers of Italian emigrants. We can also multiply our Legal Bureaus for their assistance, which have already given excellent results, because we must recognize that when these Bureaus did not exist there was scarcely any legal protection for Italian workmen.

What has been done so far must only serve to encourage us in doing much more. That this will be the case I can give the Chamber the most formal assurance.

### X. SITTING OF JUNE 23RD, 1909—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

The Hon. Ferri's visit to the Italian colonies of South America—The great work accomplished by Italians in Argentina—The Italian Associations in South America—The provisions of our Emigration Law—Means for strengthening the bonds between the Mother Country and Emigration: the Italian Schools, the federation of Italian Societies, the "*Dante Alighieri Society*" and the Circulating Libraries, the institution of Master-Agents in small rural centres, etc.—Number of Italian Schools in South America subsidized by the Italian Government—What Italy spends for her Schools abroad—The "*Mutual Aid*" and other societies—Italian Hospitals—What would Argentina be without Italian Emigration?—The question of Military Service—Bill for the re-acquiring of Italian citizenship—The problem of double citizenship—The difficulties of preventing the congestion of emigrants in the great cities—The great advantages of the Italian annual Emigration to Argentina—The difficulty of regulating the currents of Emigration.

Honourable Members! The debate upon the Budget for Foreign Affairs has this year been principally devoted

to those among our countrymen who, crossing the ocean, win over to civilization by their persevering labour new and distant regions and carry among other nationalities the talents and genius of their race.

For them the soul of the Italian Parliament throbbed yesterday as it heard with emotion how these countrymen of ours hold enshrined at the bottom of their hearts the image of the distant Fatherland, and how they eagerly welcome the Italian coming on a visit among them, and rejoice at the sweet sound of the language of their native land.

The Hon. Ferri described it yesterday with inspired language ; he was welcomed by them with open arms only because he was an Italian and, laying aside all that in him represents his party, was among them "*Italian*," first and only. And to us he has spoken of his experience with the sentiment and accent of a patriot, in which the great wave of national feeling that has surged all around him in his trip among the Italians of South America has submerged all the ancient and bitter contention of party strife.

The Hon. Ferri has raised a hymn of praise to the Italians who emigrate to South America and to the great work accomplished by them in those lands, and the words he has pronounced are not only eloquent but sacredly true.

Still, when he has spoken of the consideration enjoyed by our workers in Argentina, although he brings us impressions freshly received upon the spot, I cannot help considering his declarations a trifle pessimistic, because it is certain that the most eminent men in Argentina have, on all occasions, paid high tribute to the merits of the Italian worker. I could bring here infinite testimony to the truth of this assertion, but I will quote one alone,

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that of Senator Gonzales, who in the Argentine Senate expressed himself thus :

“ We may be sure that the same wave of feeling throbs in the Argentine heart from one extremity to the other of its vast territory, wherever the energy and civilizing instinct of the Italian people have raised a tent, planted a tree, dug into the rock to discover a treasure, or guided an engine. Our history is often illuminated by flashes of Italian greatness ; the noble Italy who has shed so much of her heroic and redeeming blood on these lands which it beautifies and fertilizes.”

After having pointed out in his speech the qualities and worth of our colonies, the Hon. Ferri has made an enumeration of the faults and failings of which they should correct themselves. He has spoken of the rivalries existing among the various Italian societies, of the dissensions, private enmities, and strife for preponderance in the colony, for commercial competition and for honorary appointments in the Italian Associations. But this is an evil which is not deplored in our South American colonies only, but in all Italian colonies abroad. And it is precisely these rivalries and dissensions which render the position of our Agents a most difficult one, because, naturally each of the contending parties would wish them to take their side, and often, if they hold themselves impartially aloof from all, they only reap the anger and resentment of every one concerned.

The Hon. Ferri has said that in Argentina there is no more advanced type of Italian Association than the primitive *Mutual Assistance Society*. Still, I feel I must express to these Italian societies in South America, such as they are, the greatest gratitude of the Italian Government. In fact, it is they which have founded and keep up the greater part of our schools, and our subsidie s,

scattered as they are upon so vast a zone, should be considered as a moral support and encouragement rather than a real and proper participation of the State in the expenses.

Here I must pause a moment, because the Hon. Ferri, while recognizing the great advantages and results obtained by our Emigration Law, has said that it solves one part only of the problem, the regulating of emigration, which is an excellent thing, but does not give very useful results if it is not accompanied by a real emigration policy.

I had the opportunity, on a recent important occasion, to express an idea not at all dissimilar from his. At the inauguration of the "*Congress of Italians Abroad*" last autumn, I said these words :—

"The provisions intended for the protection of our emigration of labourers are no longer sufficient. The reflowering of Italian feeling is creating within the borders of other States, and in perfect harmony with the development of local life, so many minor Italies, all of them precious collaborators of the populations among which they live, but each and all looking with filial affection upon the land of their origin ; minor Italian communities, if taken separately, but forming together a mass of such importance that no European country can claim a greater one. It is not, therefore, enough, thanks to our schools, to have preserved, together with the Italian tongue, the Italian feeling in these countrymen of ours, nor are the provisions already carried out for the development of our commerce, for a greater penetration of our manufactures, for the offering of facilities to young Italians residing abroad in the carrying out of that form of national duty which is military service, sufficient. In order to answer to the fervent desire of our colonies to be and feel themselves more closely united to the Mother Country, in order to better respond to the generous

impulse which prompts them to participate so beneficently in our sorrows as in our joys, in order to draw from them all that vigour which may serve to enhance throughout the world the personality of our dear Italy, it is necessary we should turn our minds to other things as well, to obtaining that originality of views which may better answer to the unprecedented example given by the presence of our nationality in all parts of the world."

Therefore, as the Hon. Ferri may observe, we are perfectly agreed upon general lines ; but the most beautiful and rare ideas are worth nothing if they cannot be embodied in a practical and concrete form. What does an "*emigration policy*" mean ? The Hon. Ferri has spoken of various applications of it to which I will return later, but if I were to define it in a few words, I should say that it must aim at keeping the emigrant as closely united as possible to the Mother Country and at his conferring upon her the greatest possible advantages.

One of the first elements, therefore, one of the most powerful means of strengthening the bonds between the Mother Country and emigration and the sentiment of national brotherhood, of maintaining alive and propagating ever more the language, the ideas and civilization of Italy in other States, of affirming her political and moral influence which should open the way to her commerce, are the schools, of which we have already spoken.

The Hon. Pietravallo and Cavagnari have raised their voice against the prevailing arrangement in the matter of schools, that is to say, of Government schools in the countries of the Mediterranean and in the East, and of subsidized schools in both North and South America. But I do not think their plan of Government schools



everywhere either feasible or useful, and this is also the opinion of all those who have studied this question.

Our emigration to South America, for instance, forms collective centres of the most different types, which go from the great and prosperous communities of Buenos Ayres, of Montevideo, and San Paulo, to the small rural centres which the Hon. Ferri described yesterday. Therefore, the action of the State must necessarily assume different forms.

What have we done? We have promoted and assisted, whenever possible, the federation of Societies supporting schools and teachers; Deputations and Councils which should co-ordinate and regulate the various existing scholastic institutions in given localities; we have provided for a wide distribution of school books to pupils; we have established, together with the "*Dante Alighieri Society*," circulating libraries connected with the schools; we have reorganized the granting of subsidies in money, making the latter proportionate to the number of pupils and the financial resources of the various schools and declaring that they will be renewed from year to year, in such a way as to be an encouragement to continued effort.

Chiefly in Brazil some special provision has been made in these latter years for certain small rural communities of our emigrants in which, through lack of means, it appeared difficult if not impossible that any Italian schools should be opened and run by local initiative. In these localities the Italian Government has sent and pays, under the name of Master-Agents, some teachers who do not only perform school duties, but offer also their support to emigrants by furnishing them with information and advice and by exercising sometimes the functions of Consular Agents. And in places where it was found there was

a deficiency of sanitary assistance we have promoted the institution, in connection with the schools, of medical and surgical dispensaries, by favouring the settlement in that country of Italian doctors, to whom we offer a free passage and a sum for the first expenses. We are also well on the road towards having a boarding school, with secondary courses, both at San Paulo in Brazil and Valparaiso.

In Argentina we have nothing to do in this line, since that Government has, with an initiative for which we are very grateful, introduced the teaching of Italian in all its schools.

Here are some figures which I think may interest the Chamber. In South America we subsidize 377 schools, which are frequented by 24,000 pupils. In the year 1908-1909 we have given them 130,000 liras in money, besides 50,000 liras for school material, and 34,000 liras for Master-Agents. A great deal has been done, but there remains much to do, which will be accomplished if, above all, our means will not be stinted.

I have been asked from several quarters when the Scholastic Reform elaborated by the Commission which has it in charge will be ready. The draft of reform has been completed and will only have to be examined by a Cabinet Council. As soon as it has been approved, the draft itself will be submitted to Parliament.

Here are the informing principles of this reform. Upon general lines, the actual scholastic programme has been followed, that is to say, the one I have just mentioned of Government schools in the Mediterranean countries and of subsidized ones beyond the ocean, aiming at preserving in our schools abroad the organization of those within the Kingdom, while adapting them to the exigencies of local requirements and at making them

answer the end for which they were instituted, that is to say, as a means of patriotic education for Italians and an instrument for the preservation of their language.

The Department for the Direction of Schools at the Ministry will be completed by the establishment of a Central Board with didactic and disciplinary functions. The scholastic inspections—the deficiency of which is at present one of the principal reasons of the not altogether satisfactory management of our schools—will be regulated. The condition of the teachers will be improved, placing them in a permanent and decorous, if not splendid position. Equitable regulations are established in the matter of pensions. Those among the actual teachers who, although no longer fit for their task through old age or illness, are in some schools still going on with their classes, are provided for by this reform. Finally, those schools to which subsidies have been granted will have their subsidies increased.

We are at present spending on our schools abroad only 1,300,000 liras. Well, when three years hence the reform will have been completely carried out, we shall be spending on them a sum amounting to 2,500,000 liras.

Having thus cleared the ground of the question of the schools by declarations which, I trust, will fully satisfy those who have with so much competency taken the matter up, let us return to our Italian Societies.

The “*Mutual Aid Societies*” are not the only ones, Hon. Ferri. I must point out with the highest commendation numerous other Associations which accomplish good work with a disinterestedness and generosity which have no equal. In Argentina there are 317 Italian Societies with 126,000 members and a capital of 21,000,000 liras. There are five Italian hospitals in Buenos Ayres, La Plata, Rosario di Santa Fé, Santa Fé, and Cordova. The hospital of Buenos Ayres alone has

a patrimony of about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  millions. There are four Italian Societies for the protection of our emigrants at Buenos Ayres, Rosario, Cordova, Paraná, which are subsidized by the General Emigration Bureau with 123,000 liras annually. These occupy themselves with finding employment for our countrymen, they pay the expense of the return to Italy of the unsuccessful or those who are unable to work, they give advice and information, have a savings bank system, remit money to Italy, exchange foreign currency and have a legal department for the settlement of claims for damages in case of accidents and for the collection of overdue salaries.

In Brazil there are 277 Italian Societies with 16,000 members and a capital of 13,000,000 liras ; there are five Societies for the protection of emigrants at San Paulo, Santos, Rio Janeiro, Bello Horizonte, and Petropolis, subsidized by the General Emigration Bureau with 100,000 liras annually.

The Hon. Ferri has pointed out that the important work accomplished by Italian emigration in South America does not give it the social consequence and authority due to it, and this is true. Without the work of Italians Argentina would not be the wealthy nation it is, and the 400,000,000 sterling which England has invested in that country would have been fruitless without it ; yet capital gives an influence such as labour does not. This is a natural law, and, do what we may, we shall not succeed in changing it. We might ourselves export capital to foreign countries ; but here begin the sorrowful notes. How often have I been urged to promote the exportation of our capital ? How often is it deplored that Italian money should not go to the countries where we wish to have a moral, commercial, or political influence, and how often the Foreign Affairs Minister is called to

task because he does not succeed in calling forth this reluctant capital? But when we reflect that right here in Italy, for the construction of public works, and in the banking business itself, we have a noteworthy amount of foreign capital employed; and when we consider that in our own land and with such supreme interests at stake we have not been able to secure the employment of our own money alone, we cannot wonder that this great and useful idea of the exportation of Italian capital to foreign countries is for the present nothing but a dream. We have a proof of it in this: every time I have been urged to use my influence in favour of some important undertaking abroad in which the investment of Italian capital would have been desirable, I have made every possible effort to secure it, but these Italian capitalists willing to take into consideration such investments are not to be found, and if by chance one of them turns up who is disposed to risk his capital, it is only upon condition that the Government guarantee the interest on the money invested.

The Hon. Ferri has proposed that we should offer facilities to those emigrants who wish to become naturalized in America, because they would thus acquire the vote, and with it political and social influence. This is an old theme, and a much debated one to which there are many pros and cons. In the meanwhile those Italians who become naturalized in foreign countries lose, by this fact alone, every right to our protection. The regulations of International Law forbid us from doing anything further for them from the day in which they have become foreign subjects. As to the vote, its effects are various. Certainly, if powerful communities were formed, moved by high ideals, their participation in the public life of the country in which they live could give them a great and

beneficial influence. But I cannot forget what Senator Lodge told me, in an interesting conversation I had with him, apropos not of Italians only, but of all the emigrants of various nationalities who congregate in the great American centres, forming smaller cities in the cities themselves. Senator Lodge is known as an opponent of immigration, because he has proposed restrictive measures, and has expressed his intention of proposing others, but he explained to me that his was not deliberate hostility to immigration; what he was opposed to is that it should centre in the great cities, because in the latter immigrants become very quickly naturalized, and, as this hasty naturalization cannot suddenly create in them either affection or interest for the new country which has become their home, upon voting days they simply sell their vote. To this he was opposed, because he considered it a disturbing element in the political life of his country, adding that he would have encouraged the idea alluded to yesterday by the Hon. Ferri,—in which we all agree, but which in practice offers some serious difficulties—of directing the stream of emigration to the agricultural regions of the United States.

Here, then, come quite a number of considerations, some of which have been mentioned by the Hon. Ferri.

When we bring into existence Italian agricultural centres outside of Italy, these become at one time our customers and our competitors. In fact, Italians have imported the cultivation of the orange and lemon tree to California and to Florida; they have cultivated the grape-vine in Argentina, and in one region, that of Mendoza, it thrives so wonderfully as to give every reason to believe that that country will soon have no longer any need of importing foreign wines.

As to the question of naturalization, I declare that

the Government will do nothing either to prevent those who wish to obtain it from doing so, or to encourage and urge to take this step those who do not ask for naturalization and wish to keep the citizenship of the land of their birth. Two things only can be done, and are contained in the Bill for the amendment of the Emigration Law ; these are the new regulations for re-acquiring the Italian citizenship and the provisions for military service.

As to the latter, the Hon. Ferri has himself made a necessary distinction between the sons of Italian citizens born in a foreign State, and who, by the local laws, become foreign subjects without losing their Italian citizenship, and those who have emigrated in their early youth.

We cannot fail to admit that this is one of the most difficult problems in existence. I have had occasion, during the drafting of the Bill, to discuss it at length, and have heard many proposals made, and subsequently withdrawn by the very men who had suggested them, on account of unsurmountable obstacles which they had not at first taken into consideration.

This goes to show the difficulty of exactly calculating the effects of these dispositions in connection with military service.

It is clear that, for the sons, *born abroad*, of Italians, every facility should be afforded. Already in 1899 this subject was discussed in the Senate, and the Hon. Visconti Venosta wisely remarked at the time that the numerous declarations of *renitence*, which were the consequence of the existing law, had only the effect of definitely severing from their country those Italians who perhaps would not otherwise have taken this step, without, on the other hand, benefiting in any way the Army.

Now, the present Bill holds special facilities for these cases. An article, which has not yet a final character, because it has been discussed by me with the Minister of War, but has not yet been brought up at a Cabinet meeting, would be drafted in these terms :—

“ Those recruits who have been born and reside in a foreign country, where, in consequence of their birth, a local citizenship has been *ipso facto* acquired by them, will be dispensed from the duty of military service in Italy, when they shall be able to prove that they have accomplished in the country of their birth a period of effective service under arms in the Regular Army, which may be considered, according to the rules which shall be established by the Military Administration, equivalent to that which they should perform in Italy.”

The Hon. Ferri would wish us to go a step further, and to consider as an equivalent for military service the frequenting of one of the “ *Italian Target Practice Societies* ” (“ *Società di Tiro a Segno* ”). This may be taken into consideration by the Minister of War, because he is, naturally, the most competent in this subject, but I have every interest, as I am persuaded he has, in making the greatest concessions in this field, because I am convinced that the result of exacting too much is that nothing at all is obtained.

Very different, however, is the position of the young Italians who emigrate. In this case, if any concessions were made, we should obtain only one result, that of artificially encouraging emigration. All our young men would emigrate in order to avoid the compulsory military service.

What must then be done ? To my mind, no facilities whatever must be offered to those who leave, but only to those who, after many years, should wish to return to



the Mother Country, by special dispositions of amnesty and condonation. In this way the principle would be saved, while at the same time useful results could be obtained.

The Hon. Ferri has praised the Government's intentions with regard to the re-acquisition of Italian citizenship, and the Hon. Sonnino has expressed the same idea, although I believe he would wish even greater facilities granted than those extended by the Government, which are already important.

These are the new dispositions contained in the Bill which should be shortly submitted to the Chamber :

“ Art. 13 of the Civil Code is modified as follows :  
The citizen who has lost his citizenship through any of the reasons mentioned at Art. 11, re-acquires it, provided :

“ 1. That he return to the Kingdom of Italy ;

“ 2. That he declare to the Recording Officer his wish of renouncing his foreign citizenship, and of fixing his residence—and really do fix it within the year—in the Kingdom of Italy.

“ This declaration will not be considered necessary for those who have already returned to Italy, and have resided there for two years.”

As to the question of double citizenship, it is, to my mind, insolvable, nor is it possible to regulate by means of special understandings the conflicts to which it exposes the various States, because the negotiations started by my predecessors and myself with the United States and with the Argentine Republic have never led to any practical result.

The Hon. Visconti Venosta pointed out the reason of this fact when, in the debate of 1899, in the Senate, he justly observed that those States believe the reason of

their very existence to be at stake in this question, and refuse any kind of compromise.

The Hon. Ferri has pointed out the evils of the congregating of our emigrants in the great cities, which become centres of misery and vice. Certainly it would be desirable to direct our emigrants to work in the open, and this is the object of every effort as far as is possible on the part of our General Emigration Bureau through its Agents ; there are, however, some natural laws which are in operation, and which it is not in our power to modify. Here is what happens in these cases. What do the emigrants do who have been induced to emigrate by letters from relatives or friends—the greatest form, as every one recognizes, of inducement to emigration ? They go to the relatives and friends who have written to them. The farm labourers seek farm labour, other workers turn to seek employment where important public works are being executed, and finally, the unskilled labourers and those who have no special calling stop in the large cities, because they are both unwilling and unfit to handle either the pickaxe, the hoe, or the shovel.

This is why I believe that the direct line to Bahia Blanca, proposed by the Hon. Ferri, which should leave out Buenos Ayres, would cause the State great expenditure without securing the results the Hon. Ferri proposes to obtain.

Besides, he has himself pointed out very opportunely that by this time there are almost no longer any Crown lands available in Argentina, and those which are still to be had cost too much. This explains why 40 per cent. of our emigration to Argentina is of a temporary and annual character, a form of emigration which I consider very advantageous for Italy, as by it we do not lose our workers, who return among us with the savings they have laid up by their thrift.

We must be very glad that the difference of the seasons, joined to the extraordinary swiftness of communications, permits an always greater development of this form of emigration. But there is a future also for a large permanent Italian emigration in the Argentine Republic, because a law has just been passed for the redeeming of national territories and a sum of 1,500,000,000 liras has been voted for this purpose and for the construction of colossal public works. Evidently, as soon as this law shall be enacted, there will again be Crown lands to be granted, and public works to be executed, in which our workers will be able to find employment. This is an opening of no small importance for our emigrants, in case it should prove impossible to better their conditions in Brazil, or, for any reason, emigration to the United States should become more difficult.

Lastly, the Hon. Ferri has put forth his final proposal, which, to his mind, would be the remedy for all evils. According to the principle of *do ut des*, he would wish us to say to those States who receive our emigrants : We will send them to you only if you will grant us commercial and economic facilities.

It is not ill-will on my part, Hon. Ferri, but real difficulties in the way of acting upon this advice that make me sceptical with regard to this proposal. Would that economic questions were not as complex and difficult as they are ! But they are so complex and so difficult that the most attentive students of such questions find, after having examined them on all sides, that there is always some unexpected consideration which had previously escaped their notice.

Moreover, to whom shall we offer our emigration ? Not to the United States, since we are at present deploring the restrictive measures they have introduced, and which

they not only show no intention of giving up, but rather mean to strengthen.

The Hon. Ferri has remarked : “. . . but I will give you an example of what the action of the State,—in spite of the difficulties mentioned for putting it into practice,—has been able to accomplish in regulating these currents of emigration. You had an important flow of emigration to Brazil, you have suppressed the free passages to emigrants and it has ceased. Threaten similar measures for the other States, and they will come to terms.”

But is it really the prohibition of the granting of free passages that has caused our emigration to Brazil to diminish, or has it not rather been due to the dreadful economic crisis that country has been going through, which has not only rendered impossible the formation of new centres of emigration, but has even made it difficult for the existing ones to subsist among the greatest difficulties and at cost of enormous sacrifices ?

If the conditions of Brazil will improve, if, above all, intending emigrants will again receive letters which tell them : “ Come, you will be welcomed, treated with fairness, your salaries will be paid, and you will not have to suffer injustice and hard times,” then the Hon. Ferri will see that, in spite of every prohibition, the current of emigration to Brazil will be re-established ; because, even if we should want to abolish not only the free passages to emigrants, but even to forbid their departure, those who would wish to go would leave from foreign ports.

I believe I have thus answered all the questions raised by the Hon. Ferri.

PART THIRD

ITALY'S COLONIAL POLICY



## PART THIRD

### ITALY'S COLONIAL POLICY

#### I. SITTING OF DECEMBER 16TH, 1903—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

The question of slavery in the Benadir.

THE question of slavery in Benadir, to which the Hon. de Novellis has alluded, is well known to this Chamber. There has been an inquiry, the results of which are familiar to all, and in consequence of that inquiry I can assure the Chamber that, all along the coast of Benadir, the slave traffic has ceased to exist and that the purchase and sale of slaves, which heretofore was customary, and on which a tax used to be levied, is entirely discontinued. If there remains any vestige of slavery it is only in the case of domestic slaves, and for those who escape from the interior and are recaptured by the tribes that roam about the coast. Now, it is difficult to entirely suppress this kind of slavery, also on account of the insufficient forces of which we dispose in those regions; for, while it is true that we have some ships that cruise along the coast, we have no garrison in that territory, and the "*Benadir Company*" is under obligation to maintain only six hundred armed Ascaris, who are a very meagre force

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for the very extensive territory they are supposed to police.

The Hon. de Novellis has also made a very rapid excursion in distant regions. Now, I do not agree with him that Italy's action should be unfolded everywhere, even in those regions where her interests are very small in comparison with the important interests of other Powers, as, for example, in the Far East, where it is evident that, even apart from Japan and Russia, the interests of the United States are much greater than those of Italy. I do not think that such a widespread policy would be useful, and I believe we have everything to gain in concentrating our action where our interests are really at stake: what we will thus lose in extension, we will make up in intensity.

### II. BUDGET FOR 1903-1904—(SENATE)

The suggested granting of export bounties to our Colony of Eritrea  
—Progress of that region—The Italian Somaliland Protectorate  
and the Mullah.

I will say a few words concerning the granting of exports bounties to our Colony of Eritrea. Senator Sonnino had justly remarked that the Chamber of Deputies has dealt only with the formal and constitutional side of the question, pointing out that the Governor of Eritrea is not empowered to grant such bounties.

Senator Sonnino urges the Government to bring up this question afresh, as it is worthy of study, but under another point of view. It would seem simpler, if something must be done, to follow an easier and smoother road.

It must appear strange that Eritrea, in so far as



concerns the *importation* of Italian products is considered a *national territory*, because Italian goods are exempt from duty on entering the colony, whereas, when it comes to the *exportation* of her own products, she is considered a *foreign territory*, since all of her exports are subject to duty in Italy.

Evidently there is something anomalous in this situation, and we must find some way of eliminating, or at least lessening, this anomaly ; but, rather than return to the idea of granting export bounties to counterbalance wholly or in part the duties, it seems to me it would be better to examine if, within certain given limits—so as to not affect too heavily the State's revenue,—it would not be possible to entirely exempt from duty some Eritrean products and to reduce it on the rest.

I will now make some remarks, following step by step Senator Vitelleschi's report.

The reduction in the customs receipts of Eritrea is a consequence of the progress of that region. Agriculture has been much developed, and there are now about 2900 acres of land under cultivation by European farmers. Some nomad tribes like the Hababs, heretofore engaged in pasturing, have at present taken up agriculture, and it therefore happens that the Eritrean Colony, which in the past found it necessary to import wheat, now produces it in such quantity as to suffice for its needs and will eventually also be able to export it. Of marked assistance towards this result has been the reduction of our military forces in the Colony.

We have been urged to not burden the natives too heavily with taxes, so as to not arouse their hostility. Now, I am able to give the fullest assurances on this point, as the taxes we levy are much smaller than those which were levied by the Negus. They are collected by

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the tribal chiefs, who keep for themselves 10 per cent. of all dues collected, which are paid in with the greatest regularity.

A most important Report has just been prepared dealing with the economical, political, and administrative progress of the colony, and, thanks to the wise direction of the Governor, assisted by the Ministry, the receipts have increased, the expenses diminished, and the colony is on the road of constant progress.

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Senator Vitelleschi has also spoken of the more difficult question of the Somaliland Protectorate, and of the Benadir concession, and it seems to me that he has been a trifle too severe in the judgment he has pronounced. He has said, to begin with, that we are following a middle-way policy, that we have neither the courage to give up these territories, nor are we disposed to spend what would be necessary to make them fruitful. We must bear in mind that in the matter of colonies we are the last comers. Soon there will be no longer in the world any territory fit for occupation that will not have been taken possession of. We have modestly participated to this colonial movement which is inspiring all the nations of Europe, and we have done so, not so much for the immediate results, as in view of the distant future.

It is the duty of each generation to labour, not only for its daily exigencies and needs, but also to do something for the future generations. If, although we have planted our flag in those lands, we still for a while will be unable to transform them into a prosperous and flourishing Colony, we hope at least that for those who are to come after us they may be a source of prosperity and greatness. We must, on the other hand, also keep in mind the fact that no State can aim at several important ends at the same

time. The Government has announced in its programme that one of the principal achievements it has in view at the present moment is the Conversion of the Public Debt. Now, this end is so important and promises such great results that for the present all other schemes which, as is the case with colonial enterprises, could endanger it, must be kept in abeyance.

It must also be considered that nothing could in any case be done at present, owing to the wars and conflicts which are harassing the colony. Until such time as the question of the Mullah will have been settled, the Colony of the Benadir will not be able to enjoy a state of tranquillity and peace.

Let us leave aside the northern portion of Somaliland, which is a barren land without water, and where it would be most difficult to introduce cultivation. Where it will be possible to do something will be in the territory of the Benadir, which is watered by two important rivers, the Juba and the Webi-Shebeli, which make cultivation possible. In future it will be also advisable to consider if it be not feasible to direct toward that region a part of our emigrating population. In the meanwhile we have a contract with a Company to which we pay a subsidy, not by any means a conspicuous one, since more than half of it is devoted to paying the annuity to the Sultan of Zanzibar, (who has temporarily transferred to us his rights on the ports of the Benadir coast), and the balance is devoted to placing the Company in a position to fulfil its obligations towards the State, which consist in keeping a garrison of six hundred Ascaris, of providing a postal service, of enforcing the provisions of the "*Berlin*" and "*Bruxelles Congresses*," and of providing also a navigation service.

A great deal has been said as to the work accomplished,

by the "*Benadir Company*." I cannot pass any judgment upon it, also because the Company has recently undergone a transformation. I must say, however, that a very able official whom we have in those regions, with great experience in colonial matters, Comm. Mercatelli, Consul-General at Zanzibar, is at present on his way to the Benadir to make an accurate study of that region, and, above all, to see in what way the Company is doing its work, and what larger provision is necessary in order to make it really effective for the purpose for which it was brought into existence, and for which the State subsidizes it.

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I owe a brief statement to Senator Vitelleschi, especially in reply to the last part of his speech, as it is important that there be no misapprehension on this point. First of all I join in the salute which Senator Vitelleschi sends to the memory of the heroic Lieutenant Grabau, who sacrificed his life for the defence of the Italian flag.

I must then add that the punishment of the natives of Durbo was at the onset inflicted by a British ship, because by mere accident it happened to pass in that locality shortly after the attack that cost Lieutenant Grabau his life. In consequence of the instructions telegraphed to H.M.S. "*Galileo*," however, the latter immediately steamed for that region and proceeded to the bombardment of Durbo, obtaining in consequence from the Sultan of the Mijourtines—who resides at Bargal, recognizes our Protectorate, and has so far shown himself faithful to the duties deriving from it—the promise that the offenders shall receive exemplary punishment.

Senator Vitelleschi would want us to do something more for Somaliland and the Benadir, but he has spoken only in generalities and has not been able to give us any practical suggestion. He has said: "Do something,

even if it do not entail expenditure, for not everything costs money." Now, this is precisely our difficulty; if the Hon. Vitelleschi has a programme which it would be possible to actuate without heavy expenditure, we would beg him to suggest it to us, as we should certainly not refuse to adopt it.

He has added that we have shown great indifference in abandoning Somaliland to the barbarism of the Mahdi. I can affirm that Italy's action has not been egotistical, but has, on the contrary, been inspired by principles and sentiments directly in favour of civilization. Let it be considered that the Mullah does not reside in Italian Somaliland, but in the valley of the Nogal, which is the centre of British Somaliland. If we had been egotistical, we should have said to England: "The Mullah is in your own territory; this conflict is not our business; *you* must fight it out with him," and this all the more since the Mullah had repeatedly declared that he was opposed only to the English, not to us, whose friendship he desired. If we did not take into account these advances, permitted the passage of English troops through our territory, and in every way assisted them and joined with our ships in the operations from the sea, it was precisely because we recognized the duties imposed upon us by the solidarity of civilized people, solidarity to which our ancient friendship with England has given greater efficacy.

Senator Vitelleschi has said: "But why do you do nothing? What measures will you take if complications arise?" To which we reply that this could happen if we intended to occupy those territories with our troops, which would necessarily be the first step to any action in those regions. We have to deal with savage tribes who live in a constant state of warfare. Those which reside along the coast and are within the range of the guns from our

ships have accepted our protectorate and respect it ; but, to render it efficient among the tribes which inhabit the desert hinterland, it would be necessary to send an expedition, which would cost an enormous sum ; in fact, it would mean unlimited expenditure, because one knows how these colonial wars begin, but not how they will end.

Now, I do not mean by this to assert a theory and to ostracize all great colonial enterprises. A day may come when we may be obliged, when it may be our duty, to undertake one ourselves, but I ask myself if it is just at the very moment in which the Government has announced a programme of development of the economical resources of the country, which is summarized in the Conversion of the Public Debt, if it is just at this very moment, I say, that one should suggest an expedition of this kind.

We have done what our duty towards civilization imposed upon us ; we mean to keep the territories of Somaliland and not to forego the possibilities of the future, and, as soon as it will be feasible, we intend to do what is in our power to better that land so as to make it a flourishing Colony. But in truth I say that if at the present moment we were to throw ourselves into an adventure we would be acting imprudently, and I am convinced that the country would be resolutely opposed to it and would refuse to follow us on this path.

### III. SITTING OF FEBRUARY 20TH, 1904—(SENATE)

The conditions of Eritrea—The Italian Chartered Company in the Benadir—The question of slavery in that region—Different aspects of this evil on the coast and in the interior—The Ascaris of Italian Somaliland—The question of ports in the Benadir and Somaliland—The suggested concession by England of a strip of territory at Kismayu as a landing place and a coaling station

—The form of property existing in the Benadir and the possible cultivations—Italian political position in those regions.

The Hon. Odescalchi in his noteworthy speech has in part thoroughly discussed and in part merely touched upon all the most important questions which affect our colonies and our emigration, and I will follow him in the development of his interpellation, touching upon all the subjects he has brought before the Senate.

Senator Odescalchi has rapidly dismissed the question of the Eritrea Colony, declaring himself well satisfied with the results of the Civil Government in that Colony ; and he has reason to do so, as Eritrea may now be safely said to have reached its complete organization. Its administration proceeds regularly, justice is rendered to the natives to their complete satisfaction, the tribes within our territory begin to enjoy the benefits of civilization, our *prestige* extends to all the outlying regions, and it is a noteworthy fact that, while we border one of the most unruly regions of Ethiopia, the Tigré, (which even at present is in a state of revolution), the respect for our name is such that the raiders from that region stop at our borders and we have never had occasion to deplore the slightest incident, nor have the rebels ever made incursions or raids into our territory. This result is not the consequence of military power, because every one knows that we keep in the Colony a limited garrison, but simply of our *prestige*, which has constantly grown in those regions.

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The Hon. Odescalchi has barely touched upon the question of Eritrea, but he has dwelt at length upon one of the principal points of his interpellation—that is to say, the question of the Benadir. He has said, (and I believe there is a good deal of truth in his statement),

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that the "*Charter*" granted to the "*Benadir Company*" was simply a way of putting the matter upon the shelf. In fact, no one can think that the men who stipulated that contract could have believed they were thus solving the question. It is not with a meagre subsidy of a few hundreds of thousands of francs that one can expect to restore such a vast territory to order and to enhance its value by causing agriculture and commerce to prosper in it. The Government did not want to spend much money on that Colony, and this way out of the difficulty was found as a means of keeping the Colony, while putting off the real solution of the problem to the distant future.

To-day the Hon. Odescalchi says: "The time has come to provide for it seriously and to formulate a programme."

This is also the view taken by the Government, and the mandate given to our Consul-General in Zanzibar is precisely this: to make an accurate investigation into all the public services of the Colony, to point out in every detail its present state, and to indicate what provisions would be immediately practicable and what others should follow as a part of a programme to be carried out in a longer period of time.

Up to the present our Consul-General in Zanzibar, who has gone to the Benadir and has established himself at Mogadiscio, has occupied himself with the most important of all pending problems, the question of slavery, which was a menace to the security of the Colony itself. This question has already deeply stirred the feelings of Parliament and has given occasion to an inquiry carried out by the Consul-General and by Commander Di Monale, the results of which have already been laid before Parliament.



After that inquiry the Governor of the Colony was recalled. Something evidently has been accomplished, because the slave traffic from the sea can be said to have completely disappeared in the Benadir. Naturally, one cannot affirm that no canoe escapes the vigilance of the authorities, but it can safely be declared that this slave traffic is reduced simply to a contraband practice.

Another scandalous fact, which came to light through the inquiry, has also ceased to exist—that is to say, the sale of slaves in the markets, on which sale, without the Company's knowledge, a fiscal tax was levied.

In the stations along the coast we may say there is no slavery beyond a domestic one, and even the latter has been rendered less onerous and the slave is tied to the land without his master's having the right of making an article of commerce out of him. The slave is obliged to pay to his master a given sum daily. Now, as in this practice there was a real exploitation, by means of a Decree from the Governor of the colony, the daily sum to be paid to the master has been reduced to about eight centimes (four besas), and this provision is generally respected.

In this way domestic slavery will gradually disappear, also, because along the coast there is no great financial profit in holding slaves. In the interior, on the contrary, it is difficult to eradicate this evil. In the stations of the coast it has been easy to make suitable provision, because we occupy these stations, and although they are closed for some months of the year, still we can always keep them under surveillance. In the interior, instead, our dominion is not effective, but purely nominal ; we cannot, therefore, give dispositions when we have not the means of coercion necessary to enforce them. What we wish to obtain we must obtain through negotiations

with the tribal Chiefs. The Colony is at present in a state of considerable insecurity, as the Somali tribes of the interior, who are naturally rebellious and idle, do not intend, absolutely, to devote themselves to the cultivation of the soil and need slaves to cultivate it, otherwise the land would be neglected and they would fail to have the means of livelihood.

Now, these negotiations have been started lately by our Consul-General, and I have to-day received a telegram from Mogadiscio, in which he informs me that he has had a conference with the principal tribal Chiefs and that he is about to come to a satisfactory conclusion, inasmuch as the regulations which would be accepted by these Chiefs would constitute an improvement, from the humanitarian point of view, even on those which are in practice in the German colonies. In view of this result, I will telegraph at once giving him the necessary powers. This is what I can say at present with regard to slavery, while expecting to receive from the Consul-General a full Report on the subject.

The Hon. Odescalchi has spoken of the Ascaris who are stationed in the Benadir, and he is right in saying they are ill-paid and worse outfitted.

I have seriously called the attention of the Company to the fulfilment of its obligations on this point, and it has sent arms, ammunition and uniforms for these men. The Company, according to the Charter, is obliged to keep six hundred Ascaris ; as a matter of fact, it keeps about one thousand, but they fall very short of what would be desired.

They come from the coast of Arabia, are poorly paid, and must provide for their means of livelihood by engaging in some trade. They are, therefore, undisciplined, disorganized, and, in consequence, absolutely inefficient.

At most they could be used in defending some fortification, but if called upon to fight in the open they would be worth very little.

At present the Company has engaged in its service some officers of our Army with the intention of organizing these Ascaris into a disciplined corps, which may answer its purpose, and I will insist that this plan be carried out in as short a time as possible. Evidently, however, it will be necessary to do something more, because six hundred Ascaris for a territory of the extent of the Benadir are an absolute irrision, and it is impossible to guarantee the security of the country and enforce the provisions decreed by the Governor with so meagre a force.

Some one has suggested that our Ascaris from Eritrea be sent to the Benadir, but for various reasons they are not suited to that country, above all for the difference of religion. The presence of Christian Ascaris among a population of fanatical Moslems, with whom flourish the strangest sects, instead of being an element of pacification, would, evidently, give occasion to grave conflicts. It will, therefore, be necessary to continue to recruit Ascaris in Arabia; the only thing that must be done is to exercise greater care in their selection and to organize them more efficiently.

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Senator Odescalchi has next spoken of another question which is of vital importance for the Benadir and for Somaliland as well: the question of ports. The coast of the Benadir and Somaliland, in consequence of the south-western Monsoon, which blows during almost four months of the year, is closed during that period, and it is not always possible to even land the mail for our officials residing in the Colony.

The Hon. Odescalchi has said that the information

gathered by him on the subject is absolutely contradictory, since some authorities assert it is possible to construct ports which would offer our ships a safe anchorage, while others declare such a construction to be utterly impracticable.

At the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and at the Ministry of Marine we have some information; our ships have also made some hydrographical soundings of those localities and the Company's engineers have studied the question, still all of these researches have been rather summary in character. What may be safely asserted is this: there is no technical or theoretical impossibility with regard to the construction of a port on the coast of the Benadir or Somaliland, but this construction would entail such colossal work and expenditure that, frankly, it is not possible to contemplate it, as it would be a case of spending many millions and of surmounting very serious technical difficulties. The mere enunciation of these extremes shows what the difficulties of such an undertaking would be.

Another solution of the problem has, therefore, been sought, which, while it is not everything that could be desired, is the only expedient to which we can have recourse under the present circumstances. The Hon. Odescalchi has observed that the only port on the Somali coast is Kismayu, on the southern side of the estuary of the Juba, which belongs to England. Certainly, if when we thought for the first time of obtaining the Protectorate of that coast, we had secured, if not Kismayu itself, which is not absolutely necessary, at least one of the inlets of the bay lying south of the Juba, we would have done something most useful for the colony.

As things are at present, there is nothing to be done but to try and obtain from England the concession of a strip

of territory, the shape of which would have to be determined, which would give us the means of communicating in all seasons with our Benadir stations and to have a naval and coaling station and deposits in that bay. To this end the Government is at present engaged in negotiations with England. I hope these may prove successful, and, in this case, during those months in which the south-western Monsoon closes up the littoral of our Colony, we could establish communications with the interior and with our stations on the coast through Kismayu, making, of course, due provision for the safety of such communications.

The Hon. Odescalchi has also alluded to the possibility of constructing a port near Cape Guardafui. The question here would present less difficulty, because there are technical experts who affirm that the locality of Ras-Hafun would be well adapted for the purpose, but even if this were granted—and it still has to be proved—Ras-Hafun is much more distant from the Benadir than Kismayu, and while a port in that locality would solve the question as far as Northern Somaliland is concerned, it would not be useful for the Benadir.

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The Hon. Odescalchi has also asked two questions regarding the form of property in the Benadir and the possible cultivation of that region. He wishes to know if there are any Crown lands. One may answer that there are not, unless one should wish to so call the land which is held for public use. Along the coast there is private property in a sufficiently well-defined form, although it is regulated by local customs. But in the interior there is a form of collective property ; the Somalis exploit the land like the ancient Germans of the time of Tacitus. It may be said that *arva per annos mutant et superest*

*ager*; that is to say, the land is cultivated first, then abandoned when it has no longer the fertility required to obtain a good harvest. Therefore, even in part of the region which borders the Juba and Webi-Shebéli rivers, in which there is some extremely fertile soil that gives as much as three crops a year, the occupation of the land would be possible. Only it would be advisable, in order to avoid contestation, to pay some indemnity to those tribes who occupy it not permanently, but occasionally, and cultivate but a small part of it.

When peace is once more established in the Colony, I think it would be possible and desirable for us to direct to the territory of Brava and to some other places in the colony a stream of Italian emigration. The question of the property of the land would not present any serious difficulty, because it would solve itself merely into a not very heavy financial obligation.

As to the crops which it would be possible to obtain, while, as I have already had occasion to say, the northern part of Somaliland is in a great measure barren and sterile, the Benadir region, lying between two important rivers—the Juba and the Webi-Shebéli—is very fertile, and in some parts has the same characteristics of the plains of Lombardy.

I believe, therefore, that as soon as we shall have re-established security in the Colony, and as soon as the danger of religious agitation due to the Mullah's rebellion in British Somaliland will have subsided, one of the first objects for us to bear in mind, if we want the colony to answer its purpose and be of some utility to us, ought to be the colonization by Italian immigrants of that portion of the land where the conditions of climate, soil, and security make such a colonization possible and useful.

The principal products which could be cultivated with

success are : cotton, sesamé, corn, tobacco, sugar-cane, and rubber. The products which are cultivated at present are : maize, sesamé, and beans. Around Brava successful experiments have been made in the cultivation of tobacco and cotton. The reopening of the Webi-Gofka, an irrigating canal which was closed by the Bimals in hatred of the Thuns, who live around Brava, and which would fertilize that region, is one of the vital questions for the Benadir, if we stop to consider that the land lying between the Webi-Shebeli and the Gofka has an average width of twelve kilometers and a length of about seventy kilometers.

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The Hon. Odescalchi has also discussed the question of our political position in those regions, which is a double one. We possess, in fact, a part of the territory as a Protectorate, recognized by the Powers ; that is to say, the intermediate tracts of land between the stations leased to us by the Sultan of Zanzibar.

The landing-places of Brava, Merka, Mogadiscio and Warsheik constitute what is properly called the "*Benadir*," and have been given to us to administer by the Sultan.

Senator Odescalchi has justly remarked that this concession of a temporary character gives rise to an unstable position, which renders the construction of any lasting work impossible. This is precisely the Government's point of view. We have, therefore, already started negotiations with the Sultan and the Power under whose protectorate he is for the redemption of the tribute of 120,000 rupees, which we at present pay, so as to obtain the full sovereignty of Italy in the territory of the Benadir, and I can assure the Senate that there is no difficulty on the general issues of this question ; the only point of discussion being the amount to be paid over by

us to that end. This question is, therefore, on its way towards the solution desired by Senator Odescalchi.

This is in a few words the sketch of my programme of reconstruction for the Colony. The Hon. Odescalchi asks me : " How will you put it into effect ? Will you suppress the "*Benadir Company*" or will you transform it ? "

If the Company should fail in its duties and should not fulfil the engagements contracted by the "*Charter*" of May 25th, 1898, the Government would not hesitate to declare the "*Charter*" revoked. It is well that this be known ; because if there is any one who believes that the Company, thinking itself indispensable, may act as it pleases and that the Government would hesitate to call it to the fulfilment of its obligations, that person would be very much mistaken, because if we were expected to tolerate the unfulfilment of the conditions of the "*Charter*," we would sooner face the momentary difficulties which the direct administration of the Colony would entail.

Having said this much, in order that it may be clear to all, I add that; if the Company will carry out, as I am confident it will do, its obligations, it will be desirable and useful that it remain in existence and that the "*Charter*" continue to be in force.

#### IV. SITTING OF MARCH 14TH, 1904—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

The relations between Italy and England in connection with the British expedition against the Mullah—Italy's duty of friendship to England—The question of the port of Kismayu—The danger of the Mullah's falling upon the Benadir—The responsibility of the Chartered Company in the question of slavery—The best policy to secure the abolition of this evil—Slaves and domestic



servants—The construction of roads in the Benadir, the re-opening of the Gofka Canal and the general conditions of that region—The reorganization of the corps of Ascaris and Consul General Mercatelli's scheme—The Judiciary Reform—Arrogance and venality of the native judges—The Government's action in the case of the Chartered Company's unfulfilment of its obligations—Possibility of the Italian Government's assuming the direct administration of the Benadir.

In the discussion on the Budget for Foreign Affairs at the Senate the question of the relations between Italy and England in connection with the British expedition against the Mullah was brought up and the Italian Government was accused of not having given the English sufficiently effective assistance. It was then easy for me to answer, showing how Italy had fulfilled her obligations as a civilized nation and as a friendly neighbour.

I think it will be equally easy for me to answer to-day to the accusation of the Hon. Chiesi, who considers we have been too compliant and yielding towards England. Never, to my mind, has any question been placed in simpler terms. The border line between British and Italian Somaliland has never been traced on the land itself. It was only indicated in the "*Protocol*" of May 5th, 1894, by meridians and parallels. This border line divides the valley of the Nogal in two, and the latter is the sojourn of the Prophet who has raised the flag of revolt against England. He conducts his operations sometimes on the British side of the valley, sometimes on the Italian. If, in her action against the Mullah, England had been obliged to rigorously respect this imaginary line drawn between the two possessions, her operations would evidently have been fruitless.

It was, therefore, our duty without associating ourselves with their war, (and we have never done so), to give the English all those facilities which would permit their

preventing the Mullah from making our territory the base of his operations. This was the duty of friendship, and it was a duty we felt all the more inasmuch as it would be in no way possible for the Italian Government to adopt an unfriendly attitude towards England in Africa and expect England to reciprocate with a friendly one in Europe. The problem is a complex one and cannot be considered separately in Africa and in Europe.

The Hon. Chiesi has said that I am satisfied with the way in which the operations proceed in Somaliland and that I am content with the news given out by the British headquarters. Really, this is not correct; we have precise news which comes to us direct, because an able officer of our Army is stopping at the British headquarters, follows the war operations, and informs us of them. There is besides reason to hope that the campaign against the Mullah may come satisfactorily to an end in the near future. In spite of this hope, we not only are not satisfied, but are decidedly dissatisfied with the conditions of Italian Somaliland. In this region we have a Protectorate that has remained purely nominal; we have confined ourselves to paying an annuity to the two Sultans of Obbia and of the Mijourtines and to sending some battleships to exercise a repressive action.

Now, if we wanted to do something more in the midst of fanatic and rebellious populations, which are kept in a constant state of unrest by the Mullah's agitation, we should be obliged to have recourse to one of those expeditions which cause the Hon. De Andreis so much anxiety. We have done nothing of the kind; we have not landed a single man, and if our ships cruise along the coast of Somaliland, it is not, as the Hon. Chiesi remarked, to uselessly consume coal, but to fulfil international obligations, such as the prevention of the slave

traffic and the smuggling of arms and ammunition, obligations which we have assumed in force of treaties.

The Hon. Chiesi has also added : " What does England give you in return for the support you have given her ? "

Our support has been of a serious character and has been so qualified by the English Foreign Minister, Lord Lansdowne, in the House of Lords. Then I may add also that it is precisely our loyal and friendly relations with England that are permitting us to enter into negotiations concerning the settlement of some questions that are vital for our possession of the Benadir and the question of the port of Kismayu.

At present we have the possession of the Benadir simply on a lease, at the expiration of which we should have to return it to the Sultan of Zanzibar. It is enough to mention this state of affairs to understand how it must in itself prevent the undertaking of any of those important and lasting works to which the Hon. De Andreis has alluded as necessary to the prosperity and the future of this possession, as, evidently, we should be spending money on the property of others. Therefore, if we mean to do anything important for the Benadir, we must first be assured that we are working in our own possessions, and precisely in these days we are negotiating with the British Government to solve this difficulty.

Next comes the question of the port of Kismayu. As I said before the Senate, the coast of Somaliland, and especially that of the Benadir, is rendered unapproachable by the Monsoons, which blow for about four months of the year in that region. During those months, no ship, unless in exceptional cases, can anchor off the coast, and the studies made by the Government, and also by the "*Benadir Company*," have shown that, even spending enormous sums, the construction of ports would be very difficult,

owing to the constant deposits left by the currents and to the formation of mother-of-pearl banks, constantly renewing themselves, which constitute a progressive barrier along the coast.

The only possible refuge is the port of Kismayu, on the left bank of the Juba. We have now entered into negotiations with England to obtain, under the form of a concession known by the name of "*easement*," not only the right of anchorage for our ships, but also that of establishing coal deposits and of making it a centre which will render commerce possible, (even during the months in which the coast is closed), by land instead of by sea, along the estuary of the Juba and up the coast to the port of Kismayu.

As to the danger, to which the Hon. Chiesi has alluded, that the Mullah, pressed by England, should abandon his country and fall upon the Benadir, I consider this contingency, if not altogether impossible, (for this no one could vouchsafe), at least very improbable, and for two reasons.

First of all the English, in the understanding they have with us for the support we are giving them in their campaign against the Mullah, have undertaken, within the limits of possibility, to so conduct the operations as to prevent the Mullah's coming south. In the second place, the Mullah has the base of his operations in the valley of the Nogal; there are his followers, there he finds the hidden retreats from which it is very difficult to drive him. Now, it is not presumable that he would leave those populations who believe in him as a Prophet, and that he would abandon his base to go to a country like the Benadir, distant from the centre of his power and where he would be uncertain of the fate which might await him. It is worthy of notice that, while the Mullah's rebellion has caused agitation throughout the whole of Somaliland and

also along the coast, Mullahism in the Benadir amounts to very little, having only the character of a reflex agitation which is grafted on to other causes of local discontent. So far the Benadir has remained in the same condition in which it was even before the outbreak of the Mullah's rebellion.

I come now to the interpellations by the Hon. Santini and De Andreis. The Hon. Santini has strongly attacked the Chartered Company. I am not called upon here to come to its defence, nor to justify in any way the points in which the Company is at fault and which I will myself indicate. As to the very serious question of slavery, it has already been exhaustively discussed in the Chamber, and, therefore, as far as regards the past, it is useless for me to return to the subject, as all the Hon. Members are acquainted with the Reports of Consul Pestalozza and Commander Di Monale, which have been published in a "*Green Book*."

It is, therefore, superfluous to insist upon the responsibility of the Chartered Company and of Governor Dulio in what took place in the past ; it is more important that I should speak of the actual state of affairs.

I can affirm first of all that at present in all the stations of the Benadir coast real slavery does not exist. Our vigilance has entirely suppressed this traffic, and in the stations of Jumbo, Merka, Mogadiscio, Warsheik and Itala slavery real and proper has disappeared. What still exists along the coast is domestic slavery, in virtue of which the slaves are no longer considered as chattels, and cannot, therefore, be traded or sold, but are only obliged to work for their master, and, when they work elsewhere, they are obliged to pay the latter a given sum per day. We are now trying to obtain the gradual abolition also of this form of slavery.

With the tribes of the interior, slavery in the old form still exists, and our efforts are bent towards obtaining that this evil be transformed, at least, into domestic slavery, as the first step towards gradual abolition.

It would be contrary to every principle of wisdom and sound policy to suddenly abolish slavery in the interior. Such a course, while turning against us all the tribes of the hinterland, whose slaves would hasten to escape to the coast, would create a serious economic disturbance, throwing within the walls of the cities of the coast thousands of persons unaccustomed to provide for themselves and at the mercy of their bad inclinations.

It is also well to consider that such a measure would only have the immediate result of making the conditions of those we want to protect harder than ever, because the masters, in order to avoid these defections, would double their severity and vigilance.

The matter is, therefore, very delicate, all the more as the Hon. De Andreis and Chiesi have declared themselves opposed to military expeditions. Now, outside of a military action there is no way of imposing our will upon the tribes of the interior, and if we are unwilling to resort to it, we must have recourse to persuasion and friendly negotiations. I do not see any other course beyond these two ; if there is any one who knows of a third way out of the difficulty I would be most grateful for the suggestion.

In these very days our Consul General Mercatelli has telegraphically asked, and obtained, the necessary powers to enter into an agreement with the Chiefs of the Bimal tribes, establishing some regulations which are to lead to the gradual transformation of regular slavery into a domestic one.

Having, first of all, established on principle the abolition of slavery, it has been agreed that all the actual slaves

belonging to the tribes of the interior should be henceforward considered as domestic servants, bound to their master by a uniform contract of labour, by which the servant's work is paid by board and lodging, in ordinary circumstances as well as in case of illness and old age. It is also established that the children of such servants shall not be considered bound by the same contract which binds their father or mother to a master; that the masters in profiting by the labour of their servants shall treat them humanely and grant them liberty to work a given number of days on their own account, so that they may have the possibility of putting together the money required for their ransom. Moreover, the exchange or passing of these servants from one master to another is forbidden. Thus this serious question may be said to be on its way towards a solution that will answer to every humanitarian, political, and economic interest.

Evidently, it is not enough to promulgate regulations for the abolition of slavery, when this evil is an economic phenomenon born of the local conditions of the native populations, who look down upon the tillage of the soil, and, being unaccustomed as yet to the employment of animals in agriculture, must avail themselves of the work done by slaves, until such time as it will have entered into their habits to devote themselves to this work, with oxen to drag the plough. On the other hand, it will be established that in the case of a servant's escaping towards the coast, he will no longer on this account obtain unconditional freedom, but only after the decision of an Italian tribunal purposely established that will examine the reasons of the fugitive slave and those of his master. If the latter should prove guilty of cruel treatment or of any other infraction of the regulations agreed upon, the former will be immediately released from every obligation towards

him and declared free ; whereas, if the servant should prove to have escaped without any justifiable motive, he will be returned to his master and obliged to pay him a fair indemnity for his action.

The Hon. De Andreis has next spoken of some work of magnitude, such as a road for the interior towards Lugh and Bardera.

This road is mentioned in the programme presented by the Chartered Company which was laid before Parliament together with other documents in the "*Green Book*" on the Benadir. But it is a very costly enterprise, which cannot be carried out in a few years.

Then there is also the reopening of the Gofka Canal, which is so great a part of the fertility of the land in the region of the Thuns ; a serious question this, which, imprudently aroused, might lead to grave conflicts. This canal was in operation until about thirty years ago, when the Bimal tribe, wishing to use the water and to prevent its flowing into the region of the Thuns, its enemies, obstructed it.

Now, the first thing to be done to reopen the Gofka Canal would be to remove this obstruction, but it is certain that the Bimal tribe would not consent to such a course unless it be forced to it or compensated in some way. This question is most important, because, while I do not anticipate any future for Italian Northern Somali-land, which consists in a great measure of unproductive sands, I have faith in the future of the Benadir Colony, and especially of that very fertile plain between the Webi-Shebeli and the Juba, a plain on which grow abundant crops, as many as three of them a year, and in which competent persons assure us that cotton and other remunerative cultivations would flourish.

The climate also is generally healthful and the



conditions of life easy, and I believe that once security, which is the first element of prosperity for a colony, is established, we could easily direct to that region a stream of our emigration. But before doing this it is necessary to accomplish some of the things which the preceding speakers have mentioned and to re-establish complete security in the country. Towards this end one of the principal elements is to establish a friendly understanding with the tribes of the interior, who, when dissatisfied, close up the roads to the caravans and fleece them.

The first measure which imposes itself, therefore, is the reorganization of the corps of Ascaris, apropos of which I also must pronounce severe words of condemnation. The organization of this corps has so far been deplorable in every way. These Ascaris are miserable men, ill-clothed, ill-fed, poorly paid, who carry on all sorts of trades and who are occasionally called to give service. When they must escort some caravan to the interior they are useless, because, being unaccustomed to handle a gun, they fire inconsiderately, wasting all their cartridges.

The local Government and Consul-General Mercatelli have elaborated a scheme for the reorganization of the Ascaris, which would require an annual expenditure of about 230,000 liras. I will send this scheme to the Company, asking it to act upon it at once, because this constitutes one of the obligations contracted by it in the Charter.

It has also been suggested on other occasions that it might be expedient to send to the Benadir some detachments of Ascaris from Eritrea. Two companies were sent there after the massacre of the Cecchi and Lafolé expeditions, and they operated against the guilty tribes. But the permanency of the Eritrean Ascaris in that territory could give rise to serious trouble, above all on account of

the difference of religion in a country where fanaticism flourishes and where one finds followers of the most intolerant sects of Islam.

Apart from these questions it is necessary that the Company should provide what is lacking in the Colony, not only at present, but also making up for what has been wanting in the past, not through the Company's fault alone, but in a certain measure through everybody's fault, including the officials sent there who, in many cases, proved themselves absolutely unfit for the task entrusted to them. Justice also should have been organized, and, so far, this has not been done. It is not known under what jurisdiction the white inhabitants of the colony are placed, because, evidently, the capitulations which were in force in those stations when they belonged to the Sultan of Zanzibar cannot now be appealed to by us against our own Administration, and the natives are judged by the Mussulman Law (*Sheriat*), which does not even answer to the needs of the natives themselves, and by local judges who are often overbearing and mercenary.

Our Residents have not been able to curb the arrogance and venality of the judges, especially on account of their ignorance of the local language, because, in order to read the sentences, they were obliged to have recourse to interpreters, and often those who corrupted the judge would corrupt the interpreter as well, so that our Resident would read a very different sentence from the one which had effectively been passed. These are very serious drawbacks.

The same thing must be said of the administrative and financial systems, in which everything is to be reorganized.

But, besides this administrative disorder, there has also been a deficiency in the political direction, which

has been the cause of serious consequences, as it has lowered the *prestige* of our Representatives and has caused the neighbouring tribes to become hostile to them on account of the alternating of acts of arrogance with acts of weakness, while a different attitude and a serious and consistent policy would have made them subservient to us.

It is a well-known fact that in the colonies the tribes that are not subjugated are made friendly by giving them an annual subsidy. Now, these subsidies have been granted also in the Benadir, but in so ridiculously small a measure that they do more harm than good.

An immediate reform is needed, and first of all it is necessary to proceed to the appointment of the Governor and to use greater caution in the choice.

After the Company shall have submitted to the Government's approval the name of the Chief Executive of the colony, it will have to fulfil all the conditions of the "*Charter*." Apropos of this, I wish to answer to the question asked by the Hon. De Andreis. "What will you do," he has said, "if the Company will not fulfil its obligations?"

We will avail ourselves of all the means placed at our disposal by the law; but we must also examine the possibility that the Company should prefer to cease to exist. In this case it is evident we cannot find even in the law sufficient means to oblige it to live and operate.

The only right we could exercise would be that of bringing an action against it for damages due to the unfulfilment of its obligations and to endeavour to ascertain and fix the responsibilities. We must, therefore, prepare ourselves also for the possibility of our having to assume the direct administration of the Colony. Certainly this is not the solution I would prefer; I should always prefer the continuation of the Company's administration, and

will do all I can to keep it in existence ; but I must declare that, if it should cease to exist, we should not alarm ourselves unnecessarily, because it would not be a case of undertaking expeditions, wars, or conquests, but simply of administering efficiently the Benadir. No one, I believe, will want to assert that the Italian Government would not be capable of doing so better than it is possible for a private company to do.

Now I repeat that I will ask the Company to fulfil its obligations, that I will avail myself of all the means the law places at my disposal to make it work satisfactorily, that I sincerely hope it will place itself in a position to carry out a serious programme, but that I am also ready to contemplate with equanimity the possibility of the Government's having to undertake the direct administration of the colony.

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The answers of the Hon. Members whose interpellations I have discussed oblige me to add a few words. The Hon. Chiesi has repeated his question : “. . . but if, in spite of every prevision, the Mullah should fall upon the Benadir, what would you do ? ” Evidently, we would provide for the defence of the Colony. To act differently would be equal to relinquishing it, and this is a programme I will never accept.

Here it is simply a question of defence ; it is a duty to which we shall certainly not fail. If a different programme is desired, a vote of the Chamber to affirm it will be necessary ; but it cannot be expected that in deference to the opinion of some Deputies the Government should consent to fail to what it considers its precise duty.

Coming next to the Hon. De Andreis, he says he cannot declare himself satisfied, because when the Government

were to be obliged to undertake the direct administration of the Benadir, it would be fatally compelled to a policy of expeditions and conquest. Now, I must declare I cannot at all see this danger, because our zone of action in Somaliland and the Benadir is a limited one, except in the direction of Ethiopia. But we are at present in the very best relations with Abyssinia, and we should precisely have to establish in a friendly manner the delimitation of the border line of the hinterland of the Benadir. In any case, if we should assume the administration of the Benadir, it would always be a Civil Administration, on the model of that existing in Eritrea, without expeditions or conquests. Since the Hon. De Andreis has mentioned Eritrea, I accept the comparison, because the results obtained in that Colony are there to show that we should not be facing any danger in the Benadir.

The policy followed in Eritrea has taken us so far, our *prestige* there is so great and we are so much respected that, although this colony borders one of the most difficult and unruly regions of Abyssinia, the Tigré, for a long time there have been no raids on the part of those tribes, who respect the name of Italy and envy the state of the populations who are under Italian dominion. Even recently one of the most important Chiefs of the Tigré went to Asmara to pay homage to our Governor, expressing the most friendly feelings towards Italy and declaring that in the Tigré all look with an envious eye upon the population of Eritrea, comparing their own miserable state, divided as they are by civil strife and molested by raids and depredations, with that of our subjects, who enjoy security and peace.

It seems to me that this should completely reassure the Hon. De Andreis, but I fear that his words have a different meaning and are not the expression of dread of

expeditions or conquests as much as the affirmation of his programme and of that of his party, the withdrawal, that is to say, from every kind of colonial enterprise.

Well, on this point the Chamber has clearly pronounced itself. The Chamber does not want conquest nor adventure ; it does not want above all, that at the time when very serious economic problems call for our attention in Italy we should waste money elsewhere ; but the Chamber does not, on the other hand, want us to abandon the colonies, also in view of the consideration that, if to-day we cannot with the means we have at our disposal obtain from these colonies all the possible advantage which it is given us to hope for, we must not prevent such a possibility for the future generations, who may be, and we hope will be, richer, stronger than we are, and may do what at present is not given us to do.

Therefore, I openly declare that, following the clearly and repeatedly expressed will of the Chamber, I cannot accept under any form the programme of abandoning the colony of the Benadir.

#### V. SITTING OF MAY 14TH, 1904—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

Italy's friendly support to England in the Mullah's campaign—Lord Lansdowne's and Lord Percy's declarations in the British Parliament—The results of the Chiesi-Travelli inquiry on the action of the Chartered Company and its transformation into a commercial concern—Example of the "*British East Africa Company*" and of the German Colonial Companies—Necessity of the Italian Government's assuming the direct administration of the Colony.

I pass to the interpellation upon Somaliland and the Benadir, a subject upon which I have had occasion to speak at other times at length both in the Senate and in the

Chamber. I consider it, therefore, superfluous to repeat what I have already said, and think it more advisable to examine the situation in connection with recent events, which are, for Somaliland, the ceasing of war operations against the Mullah on the part of England, and for the Benadir, the publication of the results of the Chiesi-Travelli inquiry and the transformation of the Company, following upon the recent General Assembly of the shareholders.

I believe that we could not follow in Somaliland a different line of conduct. We could not possibly adventure ourselves in an expedition against the Mullah, nor occupy the hinterland of Somaliland, because such a course would have cost us no less than it has cost England, who, according to the declarations made in the House of Commons by Mr. Arnold Foster, has spent sixty million liras, without counting the sum which will be charged to the Indian Budget.

Moreover, the scarcity of the results obtained would have been entirely disproportionate to the heavy sums expended. Even England appears fully convinced of this fact.

Still, while my predecessors were wise in not adventuring the country in this expedition, we must recognize they could not reasonably refuse England the permission of operating in our territory during her campaign against the Mullah. In this territory, which is not occupied by us, we exercise a purely nominal Protectorate. England could, therefore, have reasonably answered to our declaration of neutrality by demanding that, whenever the Mullah, (who has the basis of his operations in the valley of the Nogal, divided by the Italo-British border line which leaves part of the said valley within the Italian Protectorate and part within the British Protectorate), should have passed from his own territory into ours, he should

have been disarmed and his followers driven back. Now we were not in a position to do this, since we do not occupy that territory and, therefore, in accordance with those international duties which are elementary, and with that spirit of solidarity which must regulate the relations among civilized nations, strengthened in this particular case by our feelings of friendship towards England, which are very dear to us and which have in several instances had occasion of manifesting themselves in Europe, we could only follow a friendly policy towards that nation.

England has, on the other hand, declared herself to be most grateful to us for this permission to operate in our territory under certain conditions. Lord Lansdowne recently made himself the mouthpiece of these sentiments in the House of Lords, and the following day Lord Percy declared in the House of Commons that Italy's decision to not enter into any action with troops on land had been previously notified to the British Government, but that this fact did not lessen the value of the service rendered to England by the Italian Government by giving her free access to its territories for military operations which could not otherwise have been carried out.

In regard to the recent taking of Illig, apropos of which, in ignorance of the real facts, the Government has been criticized for having lightly placed our sailors in a humiliating position, by obliging them to assist in a military action in which they took no part, I have already had occasion to declare in the Senate that the full Report of the Commander of H.M.S. "*Volturno*" has not yet reached us.

From the declarations made by Lord Percy in the House of Commons we should gather that the Italian ship held itself in readiness to act in case of need. At all events, I can tell the Chamber that my instructions were



clear and explicit in the sense of our co-operation from the sea, and, in fact, the telegram which I directed on the 12th of April to the Minister of Marine ended with these words :

“ I beg Your Excellency to kindly give immediate orders to the Commander of our Naval Forces at Aden, to the effect that, after having conferred with the Commander of the English Naval Forces, who has received similar instructions, he should despatch a ship to Illig in order to act from the sea against the Mad Mullah *with all those means which shall be judged adapted to the purpose*. Signed : Tittoni.”

I think that having communicated to the Chamber the text of this telegram it would be superfluous for me to add another word.

As long as Somaliland continued to be in a state of war it was impossible for us to do anything. To-day that, owing to the beginning of the rainy season, the war operations on the part of England are about to be interrupted, we are given the possibility of once more reducing the Protectorate, if not to a state of complete quiet and security, which could hardly be obtained without our occupation of those territories, at least to those satisfactory conditions in which it was before the Mullah's appearance, and to examine the question of the Mullah in the new form under which it presents itself at this moment. To this end the Government proposes to send to Somaliland an able official who knows the localities and the language, with the mission of reporting upon the best means to pacify that region and to render our Protectorate, which has always been purely nominal, effective. When this mission will have been carried out, and quiet will have been restored, the Government will be able to examine the proposals for commercial operations in Somaliland on the part of private companies, and may also take into

consideration the plan formed at other times of appointing Italian Residents at Bander-Kassim, Alula, Guardafui and Ras-Hafun, which are localities pretty well sheltered from the Monsoons, where the effective protection of our battleships is, therefore, always possible.

The commerce of Somaliland is carried on exclusively by way of the sea and, therefore, we hold the keys to it even without occupying the country. By means of armed canoes, which can reach every point of the coast, we are in a position to guarantee safety by way of the sea, to prevent the traffic of arms, favour commercial development, and cause the local Sultans to understand in an effective manner that their existence is in our hands, and it is, therefore, their interest to remain faithful to our protectorate.

The commerce of the region of the Mijourtines is at present two million lires exports, and one million lires imports. It can, however, notably increase if the cessation of war will be accompanied by other provisions, such as the construction of a lighthouse at Cape Guardafui, of lights at Alula and Ras-Hafun, and the prolongation of the Italy-Massawa-Aden line as far as Bander-Kassim and Alula, with a monthly sailing.

As the Chamber may observe, it is a modest programme, which does not engage us in adventures or expense, but which answers to what the country wishes at this moment, that, without grand projects destined to sure failure and to be a cause of fresh delusions, the Government should at present do what can safely and practically be done.

I now come to the question of the Benadir. The Hon. Cottafavi, Santini, Scalini and Guicciardini have addressed some categorical questions to me. They have asked me what the Government intends to do : (1) In regard to the Company ; (2) for the redemption of the annuity to the

Sultan of Zanzibar ; (3) for providing means of access to the colony ; (4) to secure internal safety ; (5) in regard to slavery. I will answer briefly, but clearly, to each of these questions.

As to the Company, I said already some time ago that I would have done everything possible to keep it in existence such as it is, and it seems to me that after the latest reports from our Consul Mercatelli, after the publication of the results of the Chiesi-Travelli inquiry, if the Company may still be of service by transforming itself into a commercial concern, it must renounce exercising functions of State, for which it has shown itself absolutely unfit.

I have already answered exhaustively to the last three questions, both in my replies in this Chamber to the interpellations of the Hon. Chiesi and De Andreis, and in the Senate to the Hon. Odescalchi and Vitelleschi. Therefore, instead of repeating what I then said, I refer the Hon. Members to the official reports of these particular sittings of the Chamber and Senate.

The speakers who have taken part in this discussion have already justly remarked that, in entrusting the Benadir to a private company, the Government of the time had only one end in view, that of getting it off its hands at any cost, and entertained the most delusive idea that the administration of the Benadir by a private company would have relieved it of every responsibility. To my mind the Hon. Scalini has justly remarked that the Convention signed with the "*Benadir Company*" contained the germs of all the evils which have since been deplored.

The State very lightly caused the Company to assume serious engagements without making sure that the latter had the means, the capacity, and possibility of fulfilling

them, and the Company, with equal lightness, assumed them.

The consequences are known to all, and are such as to require serious provision, and not merely expedients or palliatives. The idea of patching it up as is best possible and, in order to avoid trouble to the Government, to continue in the system of letting the Company exercise functions of State, for which it has no aptitude, would be, to my mind, a most serious mistake.

We must to-day profit not only by our own experience, but also by that of other nations. The affirmation by Adam Smith that a colonial company is the surest means of suffocating the progress of a growing colony is certainly paradoxical, but it is on the other hand certain that the exercise of functions of State by a private company is contrary to the social and political principles of our times.

England has been what we may call the classical country of these companies with powers of State, which were called "*Chartered*," but they have only preceded the Government's action, which has always ended by substituting itself for them.

We can learn much from the example of the "*Imperial British East Africa Company*," at the head of which figured the most prominent names of the British Aristocracy. In opposition to the course followed by the "*Benadir Company*," which neglected the functions of State entrusted to it in order that the dividend due to the shareholders should not fail to be forthcoming, the British Company that obtained the administration of the vast English possessions bordering upon our Benadir, devoted itself to a political action and assured to England a vast territory ; but its colonizing and commercial action was very deficient, and the results were disastrous for it,

as in 1895 it was dissolved, turning over to the Government the administration of the Colony.

Still more instructive is the example of Germany. Prince Bismarck planned this system of colonial companies with State attributions and powers because it happened to serve the end he had in view. He wished to create from one day to another a great colonial Empire, and wanted the country to undertake it without being immediately obliged to ask the authorization of Parliament. In those days numerous German companies asked for sovereign concessions which, at that particular moment, the Imperial Government did not think advisable to ask for itself; but during a period of sixteen years these numerous companies have all disappeared; none of them exist to-day, the German Government administers directly all its oversea possessions, and the institution of colonial companies with powers of State may be said to have definitely disappeared from German Law.

All this goes to show one thing, that it is impossible to care for two interests at one time, and that, evidently when one tries to join together in one company political, and financial interests, either the ones or the others must necessarily be sacrificed.

In order to continue to exercise functions of State the "*Benadir Company*" would ask at present for a greater contribution from the Government. Now I believe that no one, after what has taken place, would dream of proposing, nor would a Parliament be found willing to vote, a larger contribution to the Company. It is necessary, therefore, to draw the balance of the past, to verify the Company's responsibilities and that the Government itself assume these functions of State; but all this must take place with the consent of Parliament; it must be the object of a special discussion; the Government,

therefore, undertakes to prepare the draft of a Bill which will be presented at the re-assembling of Parliament.

I must at once make a declaration, however, and it is this : that whatever project may be elaborated it will not weigh upon the finances of the State, because, while it is true that in order to provide adequately for the Benadir it will be necessary to spend something more than the actual meagre allowance, it is also true that this extra sum can be obtained from the surplus existing in the Budget for Eritrea. My programme is, therefore : *“Reorganization of the colony, no increase of burden for the tax-payers.”*

## VI. SITTING OF APRIL 8TH, 1905—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

Bill presented for the passing of the Administration of the Colony of the Benadir from the Company to the Government—The conditions of security in the Benadir—The reorganization of the corps of Ascaris—The understanding with the Mullah—Chev. Pestalozza's mission ; the agreement between Italy and the Mullah signed and approved also by the English—Clauses of the agreement.

I wish to answer at once to three interrogations by the Hon. Albasini. These interrogations are the following :

“To inquire if and in what limits the Government has assumed the Administration of the Benadir, and for what reasons this should have taken place without the previous approval of Parliament.”

“To inquire if the Government can give any assurances as to the actual state of security in the Benadir.”

“To inquire if any understanding has taken place between Italy and the Mullah, and, if so, of what nature.”

As the Chamber may already have observed by the perusal of the Bill which has been printed and distributed

to the Members, and is at present being considered by the General Financial Committee, acting upon the plan unfolded by me in the last discussion of the Budget of Foreign Affairs, which did not find any opponents, I propose the passing of the Administration of the Benadir from the Company, which has shown itself absolutely incapable of administering that colony, to the Government who, to my mind, should alone possess the prerogative of exercising functions of State which are ill-suited to private individuals or companies.

On account of the south-western Monsoon, the coast of the Benadir is almost inaccessible from May to October and, therefore, remains closed. During the period of transition which followed the last discussion in Parliament upon the subject, the Company, already weakened and having lost every authority, left the Benadir in a state of complete abandonment and neglect. We have had in consequence a period of four months in which access to the Benadir from the coast was impossible, while some tribes were in a state of unrest on account of the measures taken for the suppression of slavery, a period which has caused me no small amount of anxiety.

Now, against my previsions, and on account of the Ministerial crisis, the Bill could not be discussed before the closing of the coast, and it will hardly be possible to discuss it even now before the Parliamentary recess, even though the Financial Committee should speedily submit its report. It is, however, probable that it will be ready at the re-assembling of Parliament after the holidays.

In this state of affairs, in order not to again leave the Administration of the Benadir in the hands of the Company during the period of closed coasts, under my own responsibility I have arranged that if by the time the coast closes our Consul-General Mercatelli shall not have received

different instructions on the subject, he shall provisionally, and without any prejudice to the subsequent decision of Parliament, relieve the Company of its duties and take over the Administration of the Colony.

Parliament will subsequently examine the Bill with full liberty, as this arrangement of a purely transitory character in no way infringes its rights and prerogatives, while it saves the responsibility of the Minister. Because, had I still left the Administration of the Colony in the hands of the Company and serious events had been deplored, Parliament would certainly not have tolerated that I should have come here to throw upon the Company the responsibility which belonged to me and which I am ready to accept.

I believe by this to have answered the first question of the Hon. Albasini.

The second regards the conditions of security in the Benadir. The latest news we have is dated March 18th, and comes from our Consul-General who, in going to Zanzibar, stopped in the Colony. His Report is very reassuring. At Mogadiscio, at Brava, security was absolute. Only around Merka was there some unrest on account of the measures taken against slavery. Still, several of these tribes have sent envoys to us, and all leads us to believe that it will soon be possible to obtain pacification.

One of the first steps taken has been that of the reorganization of the corps of Ascaris, which, as I already have on other occasions told the Chamber, was heretofore a merely nominal force, since these Ascaris were miserable beggars, poorly armed, who could only have put up an appearance of defence behind a wall, and who, when engaged in an action in the open, were in the habit of immediately disposing of all their ammunition and of subsequently flying from the field *en masse*. At



present this corps is being seriously organized under the direction and instruction of Italian officers. We shall, therefore, have an armed force which I hold to be sufficient for the defence of the Colony.

In regard to an understanding with the Mullah, the Chamber will recall that, when this question was discussed, the fears generally manifested for the security of our colony arose from the state of war between the Mullah and the English and from his hostility towards us in consequence of the support we gave the latter. I then declared I was greatly concerned on account of this state of affairs and that I would have sent a special mission to Northern Somaliland to see if it would be possible to come to an understanding, considering that we could ill afford to undertake a war which cost England, without counting the great number of men engaged in it, more than one hundred million liras.

I entrusted this mission to Chevalier Pestalozza, who was able to have an interview with the Mullah, and after lengthy and laborious negotiations succeeded in signing an agreement for general pacification. And, as in this action Italy has always proceeded in full accord with England, the stipulations of this agreement have been approved—for the part which concerns them—also by the English, as well as by the two Sultans of Obbia and of the Mijourtines, who are under our protection. Thus we have obtained the pacification of the whole of Northern Somaliland.

Here are the clauses of the agreement :

“ General pacification is agreed upon in the interests of Italy and of England for all the region under the protection of Italy. Any dissension which may arise between the Mullah and the officials of the Italian Government, or the Mullah and the officials of the British Government,

will be settled by a joint Commission presided over by an Italian Delegate.

“The Mullah places himself under the protection of the Italian Government and under the Italian flag. He is authorized to build for himself a permanent residence at a given point of the coast with the consent of the Sultans of Obbia and of the Mijourtines, governing the inland territory lying immediately behind it. In the territory administered by the Mullah there shall be freedom of commerce. The Mullah undertakes to forbid the importation of arms and to prevent in the most absolute manner the traffic and commerce of slaves. The Italian Government will be empowered to appoint within the Mullah's territory a Representative with Italian soldiers and to establish a Custom House.”

As the Italian Government has in this understanding with the Mullah proceeded in full agreement with the British Government, the latter has naturally guaranteed on its part the fulfilment of the conditions for which we have entered into engagement with the Mullah on its behalf. No small difficulties have had to be overcome to reach this solution, which, assuring general pacification, puts an end to devastation and bloodshed and lessens the danger of those conflicts which have cost England so many lives and so much money. This peace with the Mullah, obtained by the Italian Government after persevering efforts, has strengthened the bonds of cordial friendship between Italy and England and gives us assurance that the co-operation of the two countries will be always maintained in order to secure the benefits of these peacemaking efforts.

When I placed my programme for Somaliland before the Chamber, I summarized it in these principal points :—*Peace with the Mullah ; the Administration of the*

*Benadir directly assumed by the Government ; Redemption of the stations we held on lease from the Sultan of Zanzibar ; Concession on the part of England of a landing place at Kismayu*—I am happy to be able to communicate to the Chamber to-day that this programme has been fully carried out.

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I will reply briefly to what has been said by the Hon. Albasini. There is no contradiction between my action and the declarations I have made in Parliament.

I said that Parliament should give its sanction to the passing of the Administration of the Colony from the Company to the State. The Bill I have presented confirms this statement, and I have to-day shown that the assuming of the Administration of the Colony has, so far, only a provisional character.

I could not present the Bill any sooner, because a deliberation of the Assembly of shareholders was required. This was necessary because I could not subordinate the vote of Parliament to that which the shareholders would have been subsequently called upon to give. Parliament is sovereign, the deliberations of the Company, therefore, had to precede those of Parliament, which must be final.

This deliberation of the shareholders took place only on February 14th, and the next day I presented the Bill to Parliament. The Cabinet resigned before it could be printed and distributed.

It is not my fault if the vicissitudes of the Ministerial crisis have prevented its discussion. In order to avoid responsibility I could have left the matter unsettled, have waited that Parliament should have discussed the Bill, and have stood by while the inevitable took place in the Benadir. But I believe that a Minister would be unworthy of sitting on these benches if, at a given moment, in the public

interest, he did not dare assume the necessary responsibility. If Parliament shall judge I acted unwisely I will answer for my action and leave my place to others. This is how I understand political responsibility.

As to the conditions of public security, it seems to me that the Hon. Albasini has wanted to judge those of the Benadir as if he were speaking of a province of Italy, while it is in reality a region so vast that the conditions of a given place have nothing to do with those of another and do not produce in it the slightest effect.

In all the region of Gosha the conditions of security are normal, and the same is the case at Brava and at Mogadiscio. At Merka it is some time that, in consequence of the measures taken against slavery, the Bimal tribe is in a state of unrest, but there has been no uprising in the real sense of the word. Only last summer a detachment of Ascaris that was going from Mogadiscio to Merka was attacked on the road by the Bimals, and it drove them back, killing several of them, wounding others, but without itself suffering any loss.

Following upon this event I have recommended greater caution to our Residents; therefore, while at Jumbo, at Brava, at Mogadiscio, at Warsheik and at Itala cultivation and commerce are carried on in the normal way, at Merka instead our Resident holds the Ascaris within the walls. I have given these instructions in order to avoid incidents which would drive us precisely into those adventures which the Hon. Albasini justly wishes to avoid.

As to the treaty with the Mullah, the Hon. Albasini deplores it, not for the treaty itself, which he cannot fail to recognize as favourable to our interests, but because he is opposed to colonies. But then it is a question of principle. If Parliament wishes us to abandon the

Colonies, let it say so ; if the Hon. Albasini wishes it, let him introduce a motion upon which Parliament may pronounce itself ; but until such time as Parliament shall have decided for the relinquishment of the Colonies, it is the duty of the Government to hold them and to administer them properly in the interests and for the dignity of the nation.

#### VII. SITTING OF JUNE 9TH, 1905—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

Discussion of the Bill for the organization of Italian Southern Somaliland—Redemption of the ports of the Benadir from the Sultan of Zanzibar—Concession by England of a landing at Kismayu—The danger of the increased number of arms in the hands of the natives—Possibility of Italian colonization in Eritrea and the Benadir ?—The agreement with the Mullah—Commercial importance of the Benadir.

The discussion of the Bill on the organization of Italian Southern Somaliland has given occasion to able speakers to pronounce important speeches ; still, if I may be allowed to say so, the discussion has wandered somewhat and, therefore, the Chamber will allow me, before answering separately to each, to endeavour to bring the debate back to its true terms. Some Members have raised the general question of our colonial policy, and we have heard repeated the well known arguments so often advocated in this Chamber in one sense or the other respectively by the supporters of colonial expansion and by those who would wish us to relinquish our Colonies.

Now this is not the field for a similar discussion. It is not on the occasion of the discussion of a law which will evidently improve the conditions of the administration of the Benadir Colony, that those who are opposed to

every kind of colonial policy can make this affirmation of opinion. Because, since they have not been able up to the present to obtain Parliament's consent to their principle of the relinquishment of our Colonies, they must at least be satisfied that these Colonies be well administered. Nor, on the other hand, must the supporters of a greater colonial expansion, that may not be impossible in the future, regret that we are to-day modestly taking a step in this direction, within the limits allowed us by the means at our disposal.

In last year's discussion upon the Budget for Foreign Affairs I had occasion to outline the plan of our colonial situation and to expose a complete programme. As no one then arose to contest what I said, and on the contrary the speakers who took part in the discussion had for me words of praise and encouragement, I devoted myself with every possible care to the carrying into effect of this programme.

Two points of it especially have found consent, and have been even to-day mentioned with approval by the speakers. The first of these has been the redemption of the Benadir colony. The Hon. Member who has reported on the Bill has wisely remarked that the annuity paid by us to the Sultan of Zanzibar placed us in a humiliating position and, I will add, in a very provisional one, because the concession for the ports of the Benadir being limited to a certain number of years, it might have come to pass that, once the term had expired, we should have had to leave the Colony and, therefore, also all we had spent upon it. Now, it is evident that if we might make up our minds to leave the ports of the Benadir through our own spontaneous action, by the will of Parliament, we could never become reconciled to doing so because the Sultan of Zanzibar bids us to quit.

We have been able to effect this redemption at advantageous conditions. The Hon. De Marinis has affirmed that the advantage we reap from it is smaller than is affirmed in the Ministerial Report, because the annuity was a heavy one ; but he has forgotten that it had already been reduced before the redemption, and the capitalization has taken place upon the basis of the reduced annuity. Moreover, we also gain in this capitalization about one and a half million lires, as I have exhaustively shown in the Report which precedes the Bill.

In connection with this subject the Hon. Masciantonio has deplored that we should have renounced the rights granted to us by the capitulations in the Sultan of Zanzibar's dominions, and has said he could not feel satisfied by the argument given in explanation of this fact in the Ministerial Report, that is to say that Zanzibar being under the protection of a civilized nation such as England, there was no longer any reason for the existence of those special guarantees given us by the capitulations. The Hon. Masciantonio added that the British Protectorate over Zanzibar is of long standing, and yet the capitulations had not so far been given up. But he must not forget that this Protectorate, which in the beginning was purely nominal, has been affirming itself more and more as time has passed, and to-day it may well be said that the administration of Zanzibar is nominally under the authority of the Sultan, but is in reality a truly English Administration, as that of the Bey of Tunis is a French Administration.

That we should in any case have come to this step is shown, moreover, by the fact that other nations, who are no less zealous for their interests than we are, renounced before us the rights deriving from the capitulations.

As to the concession obtained at Kismayu, the Report does not speak of it with great enthusiasm. It would have wished that England should have given us full sovereignty at Kismayu, and, fearing that the Italian concession under its present form might become a centre of attraction for the commerce of the interior towards the English possession, thus injuring the interests of the Benadir, it advises us to improve the conditions of the landing at Brava.

As to the first point, I will remark that to discuss is one thing and to negotiate is another, especially when one has nothing to offer. These negotiations have been very laborious and the lease obtained under form of *ease-ment* is different and more advantageous for us than the usual leases. Moreover, the question of Kismayu was for us also a moral one.

As to the second point, I affirm that the Government has not the slightest intention of making a commercial station out of the Italian concession at Kismayu, which would be a mistake, while it is evident that Brava is the natural point to which the commerce from the interior should converge. The Kismayu concession will be for us simply a safety valve, a coaling station, a harbour for our ships much nearer than Zanzibar, a landing place for our troops in any event and in every season.

It is the Government's intention to very shortly improve the conditions of the Brava station by making a port out of its harbour.

The Hon. Prinetti and Colajanni have entertained some anxiousness on account of the passing of the administration of the colony into the hands of the State, and have expressed the fear that it may give occasion to a more active policy, the consequence of which may be massacres and slaughter which would engage us in adventurous and



costly expeditions to avenge the blood shed and the honour of our flag.

But this objection has no foundation whatever, because the administration of the Colony by the Company, to which we are substituting ourselves, exposed us to the same dangers, without any of the guarantees we now possess. In fact, if the Agents of the Company, who did not depend from the Government and to whom the Government could not give direct orders, had made an expedition into the interior, and if this expedition had been unsuccessful and Italians had been massacred, I should have liked to see how the Chamber would have greeted me if I had come to say : “ I do not know anything about it ; it is a matter which concerns the Company alone and of which I wash my hands.”

The Government's responsibility would have been the same, similar events would have had every probability of occurring, while at present the Government, having a direct responsibility and being able to give first-hand instructions to its Agents, instead of through the medium of the Company, can assure the Chamber that, following a policy of prudence and reflection, it will not rush into adventures which Parliament does not wish and to which the country is opposed.

As to the danger of the increased number of arms in the hands of the natives, which has been mentioned by the Hon. Prinetti, Colajanni, and Sesia, I can affirm that we are trying to prevent in every possible way the traffic of arms ; that the Italian ships together with the English, cruise as much as possible along those coasts in order to capture all the canoes engaged in this traffic. The arms allowed to the Sultan of Obbia and to the Sultan of the Mijourtines have been granted in very small proportions and for very special reasons.

I have always been opposed to the granting of arms ; in fact at the time when the war against the Mullah was at its height and England pointed out to us that the Sultan of the Mijourtines with his men could have given effective support against the Mullah, and Italy would, therefore, have done well to furnish this Sultan, her *protégé*, with arms and ammunition to that effect, I declared I considered such a step absolutely inadvisable, because I did not wish to assume the responsibility that, through the changing of events, these arms and ammunition might one day be turned against the Italians.

The Hon. Canetta and Colajanni have spoken at length upon the question of emigration. An undeniable fact has been pointed out, that is to say, that it has not been possible to direct to Eritrea large currents of emigration, nor to colonize it on a large scale.

Recent Reports, which were mentioned in the last discussion on the Budget for Foreign Affairs, have shown that, if colonization will be possible in Eritrea, it will only take place slowly and by degrees. As to directing to that country important streams of emigration, it is for the present out of the question.

I must, however, confirm here what the Hon. Prinetti has justly observed, that the conditions of the Benadir are very different from those existing in Eritrea. The Hon. Colajanni's affirmation that the climatic conditions of the Benadir are less favourable than those of Eritrea is not correct, as quite the contrary is the case.

Do not misunderstand me ; the Benadir is composed of territories which differ as to fertility and climate. But there is that zone between the Juba and the Webi-Shebéli, which is really adapted for cultivation on a large scale. This zone may be irrigated, not so much from the water deriving from the Juba as from the Webi-Shebéli ; from

which the natives, by primitive means, draw the water which already irrigates a part of it, that which yields at present, even with their rudimentary systems of cultivation, as much as three crops a year.

Experiments which have been made upon a limited scale have shown that the cultivation of cotton would prosper in this region, and should, in fact, be preferred to all others. Therefore, we can safely hope that, when security will have been gradually established in the Colony, when it will be possible to land there in all seasons, when a steamship service more adequate to its needs and its interests will have been inaugurated, the progress and improvement of this zone will not be a dream but a certainty upon which we shall have reason to congratulate ourselves.

As to the agreement with the Mullah, which formed another part of the programme I set before Parliament, and which I can to-day declare to have been executed in all its parts, I cannot accept the censure moved against it by the Hon. Canetta, nor that of the Hon. Member who has reported upon the Bill.

The latter has said : " I consider it dangerous to have made out of the Mullah an Italian *protégé*; I do not know up to what point we may rely on the stipulations he has signed and sworn to fulfil."

I am willing to allow that we can only place a relative value upon these stipulations, but the fact remains that the agreement with the Mullah has an enormous importance because it relieves us from the very difficult position in which we have been placed by the war between England and the Mullah, the dangers of which were at the time pointed out in this Chamber.

By making peace with the Mullah I believe to have accomplished something useful for the country. I must

give full credit for this to our two Agents, who have been most able in the negotiations, to our Consul Pestalozza, and to the noted traveller, Signor Sylos Sersale.

A great deal is due to Consul Pestalozza; certainly circumstances have assisted us, but I believe I may take one credit, that of having had from the first moment a true perception of the question. The first time I spoke about it I said explicitly that the essential condition to the unfolding of our action in Somaliland, especially Northern Somaliland, was to make peace with the Mullah.

The Hon. Prinetti has said: "Take care, you have granted him too much, because you have allowed him a place on the coast at Illig."

But here it is necessary to make a remark: let us understand each other well. What is Illig? Is it a port? No, because it is a desert and inhospitable shore. Is it a town? No, because the huts of the natives are erected along the shore when they choose to do so, and in time of war, when battleships approach, they are taken into the interior, out of reach of the guns. Therefore, as a matter of fact, if we had not made peace with the Mullah, he would have stayed at Illig, even without our consent, appearing on the coast every time our ships withdrew and retiring to the interior, out of reach of the guns, every time our ships appeared.

And since I am speaking of the Fleet, the Chamber will allow me to pronounce a few words of warm praise for our Navy. In those constantly agitated waters, with heavy seas, with an ungrateful and fatiguing service to perform, our sailors have shown the greatest abnegation and the greatest patriotism. Without their co-operation our policy would have been condemned to certain failure. I believe Parliament will welcome with pleasure the words

of high praise which I am happy to pronounce on this occasion for the Italian Navy.

The Hon. Canetta has done his best to dispel every illusion with regard to the Benadir and to take from this region every prospect of future prosperity. In fact, after having tried to demonstrate the impossibility of any agricultural progress in the Benadir—and I have already shown this does not correspond to facts—he has also wanted to show—and this is truly paradoxical—the absolutely valueless nature of the whole of Somaliland from a commercial point of view.

Now we have here a very vast coast, which goes from Cape Guardafui to the estuary of the Juba, and, differently from Eritrea, that has a limited littoral, bound on the one side by Suakim and on the other by Jibuti and the English ports of the Gulf of Aden, which can attract to our damage the products of the Sudan on the one side and of Abyssinia on the other, the Benadir finds itself in the fortunate position that all the products of Ogaden and of a part of Abyssinia, through the region of the Galla, must necessarily have their outlet on its coast.

Therefore, the commercial importance of that country cannot be possibly put in doubt, and will certainly increase when we shall have an easy landing in the ports and security for the caravans of the interior.

As to the question of frontiers, the Hon. Canetta has erroneously said that our possession of Lugh is contested by England.

England has never made Lugh an object of contestation : only Italy has not drawn the border line of Somaliland on the Ethiopian side and therefore in the direction of Lugh ; but the fact remains that we have a Resident there who exercises all his functions.

The Hon. Canetta has insisted that the question of

the frontier between Italian Somaliland and Ethiopia be speedily defined ; but, frankly, I do not see the urgency and necessity of proceeding to this delimitation. Between the Benadir proper and Ethiopia there is a very vast region which belongs no one knows exactly to whom, and the delimitation of which would have at the present moment no special importance and would produce no practical consequences. Let us, therefore, leave to time the solution of problems such as this.

I have a few things to say in connection with the proposed Bill, but, since the speakers have announced their intention of discussing its various articles, it is on that occasion that I will make these remarks. In this general discussion it is enough for me to have placed the question upon a simple and practical ground, equally aloof from preconceived opinions and from the exaggerations of those who, making theoretical studies their starting-point, wish on the one hand the complete relinquishment of the Colony, or on the other an action which we are not at present in a position to exercise.

My point of view has been that, since we must keep this Colony, we must do so with dignity and decorum ; we must accomplish a work of civilization and not expose ourselves to the possibility that other nations should reproach us with ill-administering colonies which they could make strong and prosperous.

In this competition of civilized nations we must, within the limits of our modest forces, not remain behind the others. I have said, within the limits of our forces because one of the advantages of this Bill is that it does not demand any sacrifice on the part of the tax-payers.

The expenses for the Benadir will be met and covered entirely by the surplus which we obtain from the Budget of Eritrea, and this surplus is not fantastic nor yet to

come. The matter stands like this: we shall have at our disposal from the Budget of Eritrea, first the annuity of 600,000 liras by which the Treasury is reimbursed of the sum it advanced when the frontier line between Eritrea and Abyssinia was fixed; secondly, we shall be able to avail ourselves of the annuity of 150,000 liras paid to the Pirelli firm for the construction of the submarine cable, Massawa-Assab, which is about to expire. It is precisely with these 750,000 liras, which are not a product of our imagination but a tangible reality, that we shall meet the expense for the Benadir, together with the sums already contemplated by our Budget for that purpose.

I think I have, therefore, demonstrated that this reorganization answers to what is the precise duty of the State, that it has the merit of solving the outstanding questions, and answers to the desiderata which had on so many occasions been expressed in the discussions in Parliament, and, finally, has the advantage of not demanding any sacrifice from the Italian taxpayer.

I hope the Chamber will be convinced by my words and that it will give its favourable vote to this Bill.

#### VIII. SITTING OF JUNE 15TH, 1905—(SENATE)

Italian commercial enterprise in Eritrea—Italy's action in Ethiopia  
—The possibilities of Italian emigration and colonization in Eritrea—Criticism of the cession of Kassala—The Kismayu concession.

The Hon. Vigoni has uttered very grave and very strong words, remarking that our colonial policy is nothing but a mass of errors. I believe, as I have already said, that he has greatly exaggerated, above all when he has

pronounced general opinions unsupported by any proof or by the enunciation of any fact serving to uphold them. He has said, for instance, that individual initiative has never met with any encouragement at the Foreign Affairs Ministry. Now, I would ask him what are the instances of individual initiative that the Foreign Affairs Ministry has discouraged.

In regard to this matter it is well to make things clear, because we have here a repetition of that habit, unfortunately too frequent in our country, which expects the Government's action, that can only complete and integrate individual initiative, to substitute itself to the sluggishness and indolence of that initiative. Now, while it is possible for the Government to encourage and assist all the colonial enterprises which may present themselves, it cannot on the other hand be expected that when private capital is diffident, sluggish, and reluctant, the Government should substitute itself to the action of private citizens.

The examples of other nations which have been cited by the Hon. Vigoni have no value, for the very reason that what takes place in other nations does not take place among us. Germany's wonderful policy of expansion has been pointed out; but what happens in Germany? In every case the Government's action only follows that of private citizens, and Diplomatic action comes always after that of business men and industrial concerns.

Now in Italy it has never happened that the Government has been urged by Italian commercial and industrial firms; it has, on the contrary, often tried, for the most part uselessly, to stimulate their action, therefore it cannot cause surprise if the results have often been what they have been.

I will cite what I may call a classical example. If



there is in Italy a section of citizens noteworthy for business intelligence and for power of capitals, this is evidently that of the cotton manufacturers. Now, everyone knows—and I believe some speakers, among others the Hon. Vigoni and di San Giuliano, have mentioned this fact—what an enormous importance manufactured cotton goods have in the African continent, where they constitute the only article of clothing used by the native populations.

The Foreign Affairs Ministry and the Ministry for Agriculture have done everything in their power; they have sent circulars, spread information, forwarded samples, and, in so far as regards Eritrea, a sort of special protection has been established, because, while foreign cotton goods pay a duty of ten per cent. *ad valorem* to enter into Eritrea, the Italian ones are exempt from duty. Well, not only are cotton goods throughout Africa exclusively of English or American manufacture, but in Eritrea itself it is *foreign* firms and not *Italian* ones who furnish the cotton goods used in that colony. Now, when we have examples such as this, it is only natural that the men who are at the direction of public affairs should feel disheartened.

Senator di San Giuliano, like Senator Odescalchi before him, has spoken of colonizing enterprises abroad. I have always told Senator Odescalchi and the Emigration Bureau, which has treated this subject, that I am disposed to give encouragement and premiums to Italian colonies, to societies for the protection of emigrants, etc., after they have accomplished a given enterprise, the results of which are evident, so that this subsidy should serve as an encouragement to persevere. I absolutely refuse to give the only form of State assistance which has been suggested to me, that of a Government guarantee of interest on the

capital invested in these enterprises. This would not be an encouragement to thrift but to sluggishness, because those who would have their interest thus assured would do nothing further. And I am sorry that the only serious proposals which have been made to me bearing upon emigration and colonization rest upon this basis of a guarantee for the capital invested, which I consider absolutely unacceptable.

Senator Vigoni has spoken also of our action in Ethiopia. No one denies that serious mistakes have been committed in our colonial policy, but all these mistakes can be traced to a common origin, that is to say that Italy having once occupied some regions beyond the seas, instead of following a steady policy with continuity of purpose, we have begun to discuss afresh if these Colonies were to be held or not ; therefore, allowing ourselves to be overtaken by events unprepared, we have ended by neglecting them, while spending more than would have been necessary in order to place them safely on the road of economic improvement.

Each of the political men who has had a part in the Government or who occupies himself with colonial matters should examine his conscience and judge dispassionately if all the errors must be laid at the Government's door, or if there are not extenuating circumstances in the lack of support from public opinion and in having reduced the colonial question to an arena for political strife in Parliament. I have had occasion to say very explicitly that if we want to keep the Colonies we must do so with a full sense of the responsibilities which must be assumed.

As to the Shoa, I do not understand what the Hon. Vigoni alludes to when he speaks of the neglect of our interests in that region. Our action in Ethiopia, such as

it is, develops itself at present with uniformity, and the not indifferent expense we sustain in keeping a Legation at Adis Abeba shows the importance which we attach to the Ethiopian question.

The concession obtained from Menelik beyond Mareb, which seems to have been overlooked by Senator Vigoni, has a great importance, not only commercial and agricultural, but also political. In the same way the Wallega concession, which is in the hands of Italians, has no slight bearing. Telegraphic lines have been established by Italian enterprise over considerable tracts of land, beyond Mareb, in the Tigré, in the Shoa, and continue towards the southern provinces of Ethiopia. The road from Adis Abeba to Adis Alem has been constructed under Italian direction. All the telegraphic, telephonic material, etc., has been purchased by the Negus in Italy, and it is in Italy he furnishes himself with many articles of luxury as well as of common use.

As to the question of the hinterland of Somaliland and of the Benadir, I do not know precisely what the Hon. Vigoni has meant to say. This hinterland is fixed by protocols and its demarcation is simply theoretical, because there is no effective occupation on our part. For the present we occupy only the coast and we shall not for some time be able to penetrate into the interior, except in regions such as those around the Juba, where we can already see the advisability of colonization and of agricultural improvement.

A great deal has been said about the conditions of Eritrea and the possibility of colonizing it, and just as in the Chamber I had to correct some too pessimistic opinions pronounced upon the subject, I must here in the Senate tone down a little the too hopeful opinions expressed.

Senator Carafa d'Andria has referred to Menzinger, who has described Ethiopia as a wonderful garden ; but he had only visited the region of the Bogos, where the conditions are most propitious ; Schweinfurt has spoken as a scientist, from the botanical point of view ; Stanley, in expressing a favourable opinion, has taken into account two elements—the vicinity to Europe and the security of the port of Massawa.

To-day, without having recourse to authorities which are somewhat antiquated, and apart from foreign opinion, we have the recent observations of our own countrymen who have visited Eritrea, have studied it attentively, and whose Reports, published in the Colonial Bulletin, give the results of their investigations.

Certainly the development of our activity cannot limit itself to the Colony alone. Be it for commerce, be it for emigration, it is beyond Mareb that we must look, and it is certain that something has been done towards this end by the opening of the commercial routes beyond Setit and towards Gondar, and the idea, at present approved by the majority, is that the railway should run towards the Tigré and beyond it.

As I have already said in the other branch of Parliament, the work of demarcation of the Crown lands is well advanced and exact indication of the cultivable zones shall be given as soon as this work is completed, which, according to the law of 1903, must be submitted to the Colonial Council. Moreover, the zones suitable for colonization are well known ; the Colony has land adapted to different sorts of cultures, comprising those of the tropical and temperate zones.

The Eritrean table-land, especially in the Seraè, is suitable for the cultivation of grain crops. The Zannoni Report is about to be published in the Bulletin of

Emigration, and in order to have a clear idea of this very able piece of work it will be well for the Hon. Members to read it as a whole. Its conclusions, moreover, are known and have been repeated by me to the Chamber.

It is not a current of emigration which is possible in Eritrea, but only the establishment of families of colonists which have a small capital at their disposal. It is evident that, once a first nucleus is formed, others will follow, and this might lead to a gradual expansion of emigration beyond the Mareb.

As to the Budget, we must bow our heads ; it is what it is. Certainly, in order to make the financial programme correspond to the economic one it would be necessary to greatly increase the former. It is true that for the expenses of an economic character the Budget assigns only 130,000 liras, but we must not forget that other sums, which are scattered in many other items of the Eritrean Budget, are in effect used for the economic development of the colony. Thus, for instance, those for the Commissioners and the Residencies established to superintend the cultivations, as well as those for public works, and even for military works which serve to improve the country's system of roads.

As to the mines, the latest reports upon those of the "*Eritrean Gold Mining Company*" and upon those of Keren, belonging to the Forni concession, are encouraging. There is no special mining legislation as yet. Only the right of discovery and exploration has been regulated, but a special mining legislation will be provided shortly in the proposals which will be submitted to the Colonial Council.

Senator Vigoni has deplored some errors of the past, and in this I can easily associate myself to his words, because the cession of Kassala to England really deprived our

Colony of an important element of vitality. We could at least, at the time, have had something in exchange for it ; if nothing else, that cession of Kismayu which to-day the Hon. Vigoni vainly wishes me to ask England, because I could not with dignity make such a request, when, having nothing to offer in exchange, I should be sure of a refusal.

Coming to the question of the landings, he has said that the landing near Kismayu is not only deprived of any utility for us, but may prove to be harmful for our Colony, in this sense, that it may attract towards Kismayu, rather than towards the Benadir, the commercial currents which come from the Juba. Now, I will tell him that the concession of the piece of land granted to us as a landing place neither attracts nor drives back the commercial currents of the higher Juba, because the port of Kismayu, with the advantages it can offer to commerce, exists independently of our concession.

The latter gives us this advantage, that, until such times as the works which technical experts now declare possible in the port of Brava are completed, it will make easy, or at least render less difficult, the access to the Colony during the four months in which the Monsoons render the coast inhospitable. Up to the present, during these four months, our nearest landing place for all the relations with our colony was Zanzibar, which is much more distant. The landing at Kismayu, where we will establish a coaling station, and to which we will direct, not the goods coming from the Benadir but those we wish to forward to that region, will serve precisely to establish this communication.

## IX. SITTING OF MAY 16TH, 1907—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

Italian Emigration to Eritrea—The question of monopolies.

The Hon. Franchetti, with a praiseworthy intention which he has for years upheld with the greatest steadfastness would wish to direct to our colony a current of emigration, diverting it from that which is at present directed to other countries; a most laudable intention, which deserves to be encouraged. It presents, however, in practice some very great difficulties; because emigration is not an artificial phenomenon, it is not a current which one can easily divert or direct with dams or dykes. It resembles somewhat the migrations of birds; there is something of an intuitive character in it, which answers, however, to given economic conditions, that are not understood by those who emigrate, but which they nevertheless obey. The fact is that up to the present emigrants have gone where they have wanted to go and not where one would have wished to send them. This shows that the artifices of laws and of administrative regulations can have only a relative influence upon these economic phenomena.

Does this mean one should not try? Not at all. I am of the Hon. Franchetti's opinion, and will even go as far as to say that I had proposed to make a decisive experiment, the conclusion drawn from which should have been, either that emigration to the Colony would have been possible, or that the idea of it should have to be entirely given up. The Board of Emigration, which has found itself in the rare and fortunate position of having to employ in some way the important economies of its

special Budget, discussed at length last year the proposal which had been submitted for the formation of Italian colonies in South America, for grants to colonists, for advancing the money necessary for the purchase of seed, and so on.

Examining these proposals, the Board of Emigration did not express a decided opinion, because all those who took part in the discussion held different views; but I discarded them at once upon a question of principle, because, as a basis for the whole operation, the promoters wanted the Government to guarantee the interest upon the capital employed. I considered it impossible to enter into discussion upon similar bases, and rejected the proposal.

But, even if it had not contained that clause which I considered unacceptable, I could not have taken it into consideration, because I think that it has been most useful to protect our emigrants during their trip to foreign lands, and from the vexations and ill-treatment of which they were heretofore the victims, but that when we should be called upon to spend important sums in order to establish Italian agricultural colonies in countries beyond the seas, it would be the case of stopping to consider if it would not be more advantageous to spend this money in those provinces of ours which are sparsely inhabited and in miserable economic conditions, where the exodus of emigrants means always greater impoverishment, and if, instead of subsidizing the emigrant beyond the seas, it would not be better to subsidize him more efficiently in the country he is preparing to leave, in the hope that this timely assistance may induce him to desist from leaving his native land.

Another reason also led me to reject that proposal, the one mentioned by the Hon. Franchetti, that is to say that,



if some experiment of this kind must be made, it should be carried out in preference in our Colony. And in accordance with the Hon. Franchetti's ideas, I propose to place this subject before the Board of Emigration and to ask it to devote a fund to this end, because we should know once for all if emigration to our Colony is possible or not.

The Hon. Franchetti then, anticipating the opinion I shall be called to give, would want me to undertake not to lease any land in Eritrea to the natives, because he fears that the territory so leased may be thus lost to the future colonies of our emigrants which he hopes to see established. Now, it is necessary to proceed with great caution in this matter.

If it is a case of not leasing Crown lands which have not so far been cultivated, the Hon. Franchetti's suggestion may be accepted within certain limits; because, if this experiment of emigration must be made, it is natural that we should try to reserve for it the best pieces of land; but if upon the expiration of the leases which the natives at present hold we should send them away from the land they now occupy, then the question would become very serious and would assume a political character; because when it became known in the Colony that the Government had in mind to re-organize the system of land taxes, the rumour spread that the Government wanted to despoil the natives of their lands, and, as these have for them a great value, it is clear that any provision too lightly decided upon might start a dangerous unrest in the Colony.

Therefore, while accepting the Hon. Franchetti's proposal for those lands which should be in the future leased to natives, I make the most ample reservations for those which the natives already hold on lease.

Let us come lastly to the question of monopolies.

Even in this matter it is out of the question to theorize ; generalizations would be quite out of place. If we wished to indulge in them it would be useless to enter into discussion. It would be sufficient to send our colleagues to the floor above, to the Library, where they could read all that has been written for and against monopolies from a theoretical point of view. Here the question is a different one. There is no reason for granting monopolies except in special cases ; but the granting of a monopoly is fully justified if, for instance, there exists in the colonies a product which is generally neglected because its exploitation requires an important initial outlay and competition would be difficult to sustain, and when, through a monopoly, (always granted with caution and for a limited period), we should bring into being a new industry which would otherwise not exist ; when, finally, by allowing free competition we should gain nothing, since no one would profit by it.

The Hon. Franchetti must not, therefore, ask me to bind myself by declarations of a general character. It is a question of placing confidence in the Governor of the Colony and in the Minister who is answerable for him before Parliament.

So far there has been only one instance in which a monopoly has been granted ; that is to say for the mother-of-pearl fisheries, which were unsuccessful for a number of causes ; the reason for which it was granted however was not an economic one, but because the unlimited freedom of mother-of-pearl fishing was leading to the complete destruction of that shell, so that in a few years the absence of raw material would have caused this industry to disappear.

Let not the Hon. Franchetti, then, ask too much ; let him be satisfied with my declaration that, upon general

lines, I find his observations just and that, if some monopolies will have to be granted, it will be only for the reasons I have said and which the Chamber will be fully able to value.

#### X. SITTING OF FEBRUARY 13TH, 1908—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

The question of Italian sovereignty over Lugh and its territory—Historical sketch of the question—Negotiations with Menelik—Menelik at last willing to treat, but on the basis of a financial compensation—Conditions of the Benadir and the Government's programme—Some figures of the commerce of the Benadir—Obstacles to be overcome—Italian advance and occupation of the Webi-Shebeli—The increase and improvement of the corps of Ascaris—Public works: ports and railways—The re-opening of the Gofka Canal—Shipping services—Possibility of Italian Emigration and Colonization of the Benadir—The cultivation of cotton—The results of Signor Carpanetti's experiments—The Carpanetti concession and its conditions—Character of similar concessions granted by England, Germany and France—The colonial system—Examples drawn from the French Colonies—The three stages of colonial public credit.

I come at once to the question of our sovereignty over Lugh and its territory.

The station of Lugh was founded by Captain Bóttego in his second trip to Africa, in December, 1895. Having built a small fort on the isthmus of Lugh to protect the station, he continued his journey, leaving at Lugh Ferrandi with forty-two Ascaris, ammunition and provisions. Ferrandi administered the station on behalf of the Italian Geographical Society during sixteen months, and in December, 1896, he repulsed an attack of Abyssinians led by Wold Gabriel.

Up to this time Abyssinia had never laid any claim

upon Lugh, and, in fact, in Menelik's famous letter of April 21st, 1891, to the Powers, to acquaint them with the limits of his Empire, he fixed the latter "*at the border of the Somalis, including the provinces of Ogaden.*"

Now, the border line between the region of Galla and that of the Somalis is almost at the fourth parallel, at several days' march north-west from Lugh, which is situated, therefore, in Somali territory. It was only after the unfortunate war of 1895-6 that Menelik began to lay any claim upon Lugh.

On October 26th, 1896, the Italian Government signed the Peace Treaty with Ethiopia and the Convention for the exchange of the prisoners of war. On March 28th the Government gave final instructions to Major Nerazzini to regulate the question of frontiers.

Having fulfilled his mission, Major Nerazzini returned to Italy in June, 1897. He brought a map given him by Menelik, upon which the latter had traced the frontier he wished to see established and had affixed to it his seal. The frontier traced on this map, which is that by Habenicht, (*Spezial Karte von Afrika 'Section Abissinien' 6*), corresponded to the proposal referred to by Major Nerazzini in his Report to the Italian Government, which he expressed in the following terms :

"As to the border line on the side of the Indian Ocean, I obtained a demarcation which gave us, starting from the point of intersection of our frontier with the English one in the land of the Somalis, a zone of absolute possession parallel to the coast, of the depth of about 180 miles from the coast itself, and which reaches the course of the Juba at that point in which the cataracts of Von der Decken are marked. According to this frontier line the station of Lugh would be excluded from our possessions, and I deemed it my duty to insist very

strongly upon this point ; but, as usual, while the Sultan of Lugh had entered into an engagement with Captain Bóttego by signing a treaty real and proper, he had equally bound himself by a written agreement with a declaration of subjection to Menelik. Menelik refuses to recognize the absolute possession of Lugh by Italy, but undertakes to recognize the establishment of Italian commerce in that station, engaging himself to protect it from raids on the part of the Amhara."

On September 3rd, 1897, the President of the Council, the Foreign Affairs Minister and the Minister of War telegraphed directly to Menelik that the new frontier traced by him with Major Nerazzini had been accepted by the Italian Government.

Menelik answered with a telegram addressed to the Foreign Affairs Minister : " Telegram of September 3rd received. Very glad of the ratification of treaty of commerce and of agreement upon new frontier ; hope in friendly relations between ourselves and Italy."

The Foreign Affairs Minister, Visconti Venosta, on October 19th, 1897, instructed Major Ciccodicóla, our Minister at Adis Abeba, to confirm the acceptance by the Italian Government of the frontier proposed by Emperor Menelik on June 24th, 1897, but added :

" The recognition of the establishment of an Italian commercial station at Lugh is not sufficient to guarantee that station. You will have to propose for Lugh a real and proper commercial convention which guarantees both the station and the roads communicating with the coast. You must also again insist with the Negus, in order to obtain the inclusion of Lugh in Italian territory, since it lies in a zone which has not been defined, and is not recognized as forming part of the Ethiopian Empire, according to the very letter of 1891, by which Emperor

Menelik notified the Powers of the whole extension of his dominions."

By a telegram dated Jan. 6th, 1898, Minister Visconti Venosta gave renewed instructions to Major Ciccodicóla, to the effect that he should insist that Lugh should remain to Italy. Menelik answered Major Ciccodicóla in the following terms :

"Why do we want to re-open the frontier question, when, thanks be to God, it has all been settled? The Government of His Majesty the King of Italy informed me that it accepted what I submitted to its consideration. If, after this, we begin once more to talk about frontiers, then the question renews itself, and there will be no end to it."

Subsequently the Hon. Visconti Venosta gave instructions that Lugh should remain occupied and administered exclusively by Italy, according to certain conditions to be agreed upon.

These instructions were confirmed on June 8th by Foreign Affairs Minister the Hon. Cappelli, and finally Menelik assured the maintenance of the *status quo* with regard to the station of Lugh, to the surrounding territory and to the roads communicating with the coast.

On October 28th, 1903, Foreign Affairs Minister, Morin, entrusted Major Ciccodicóla with negotiating with Menelik "*to determine generally the regions and populations which are not to be occupied or raided.*"

In October, 1905, I renewed to Major Ciccodicóla the instructions given him by the Hon. Morin, which were subsequently confirmed by Minister di San Giuliano in February, 1906, and in the following March by Minister Guicciardini, who asked Major Ciccodicóla explicitly "if he thought the time had come to treat the question of Lugh with Menelik upon the basis of solving it by establishing a neutral zone, without speaking of demarcation of frontiers."

In June, 1906, I asked the Hon. Martini, Governor of Eritrea, to speak himself with Menelik about this neutral zone at Lugh.

Menelik answers twice : " The frontier is at Bardera," then he accepts the Hon. Martini's proposal, that an Italian Resident remain near the Dejak Lull Seghed, and hold him within the limits which we have reason to demand be not overstepped.

Menelik tells Martini that he could show him the original document containing the Italian Government's acceptance of the frontier at Bardera.

The Hon. Martini concludes that, independently from the question of the possession of Lugh, Menelik had formally assured him that the *status quo* would have been maintained, and that we should be able to remain at Lugh undisturbed as in the past.

With telegrams and reports of September, October, November, December, 1907, Captain Colli communicated fresh assurances on the part of Menelik for the maintenance of the *status quo* at Lugh.

As it happened, a short time before the incident of Bardale, Menelik became diligent and insisted himself that the question of the Somali frontier be settled.

It was no longer possible to protract a solution; therefore, acting upon my instructions, Captain Colli has started negotiations at Adis Abeba upon the basis (a) of the drawing of a line, which from Dolo, along the fourth parallel, should reach the Webi Shebeli and should subsequently follow the line of 1897, parallel to the coast, up to the Italo-British frontier of May 5th, 1894; and (b) of the establishing of a neutral zone around Lugh, which should be unmolested by raids.

Menelik has agreed to treat upon this basis, which would assure to Italy the road from Dolo to Lugh, and

Lugh itself with all its territory, but he wishes for financial compensation, recalling the precedent of 1900, for the Eritrean frontier.

As we cannot fail to recognize that a restriction of frontiers and of action brings with it a diminution of profits, we have agreed to treat upon the basis of a fair indemnity, taking up again an initiative hinted at by Minister Visconti Venosta on October 21st, 1899, in a telegram of his to Major Ciccodicóla, which was not acted upon. We have made our reserves, however, as to the analogy of the precedent of 1900, when all outstanding financial questions with Ethiopia were settled on the occasion of the frontier Convention, and we are putting forward our claims upon Lugh.

In one of my latest telegrams to Captain Colli, I pointed out to him that during the last ten years a situation has been created which has caused Menelik and ourselves to consider the *status quo* in the hinterland of the Benadir after 1897 under different points of view. Consequently, the *status quo*, such as we have meant it and enjoyed it, must be changed into a state of lawful possession by the new agreement we are about to conclude. We will thus find ourselves in harmony with the action we have up to the present unfolded, which has never admitted that either Abyssinian action or raids could go beyond the line of Bardera.

This is how the question stands at the present moment. I have considered it my duty to place it before the Chamber and the country with the greatest preciseness and sincerity, withholding nothing that could constitute a necessary element in order to put the question in its true terms and on the road to a complete and final solution with the full knowledge of Parliament.

It has been criticized by some that after the compact



of 1897 we should have established a garrison at Lugh. The truth is that the garrison has always been there from the days of the first occupation by Captain Bóttego. Moreover, after Ferrandi, there having remained at Lugh as our Representative a native Agida, at the request of Menelik himself, we replaced him by Lieutenant Cappello of our Royal Navy, because the presence of a native Chief could have given rise to conflicts, while Lieutenant Cappello had instructions to maintain friendly relations with the Abyssinian Chiefs on the frontier.

As to raids, they have taken place also on English and French territory, and we, like England and France, have always protested.

Must I here recall what were the conditions of the Benadir in the times of the old Company? They have been too often and with too vivid colours described and severely deplored in this Chamber, as well as in the other branch of Parliament for such a course to be necessary. Must I demonstrate how much has been done from the day in which, declaring myself opposed to colonial companies having State powers, I outlined the programme that the State should have carried out through a direct administration?

It is enough to read that programme to see that what I then said has already been done or is on the road towards being accomplished. I will not dwell on this point, because I have yet much ground to cover and must limit myself to saying things which are not known, and not repeat assertions which any one may verify. It is true there is still much to do, but it does not mean that little has been done. A great deal has been accomplished, a great deal prepared, and a great deal will also remain to be done by my successors.

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What are the conditions of the Benadir ? What can be done ? What do we propose to accomplish in regard to commerce ; to our advance along the course of the river ; to the security of the caravan routes ; to the corps of Ascaris, which constitute our military force in that region ; to the possibility of establishing an Italian emigration and colonization in those territories ; to the importance and extension which may be given to the cultivation of cotton ; to the assistance which the Colony may receive through the institution of colonial credit ; through that which may come to her from the adjoining Northern Somaliland ?

These are the points that, to my mind, hold the whole problem which I, encouraged by the kindly attention of the Chamber, propose to deal with briefly. And let us begin with some figures.

The figures which give the value of the goods imported and exported from the ports of the Benadir during the last decade show the rapid increase of that commerce during the direct administration of the Colony by the State. In valuing these figures we must bear in mind that they are reckoned upon the basis of the custom duties, which are *ad valorem* and, therefore, the fluctuations in the value of the *thaler* may have an influence on the quantity of the goods. During the year 1896-97 the movement of goods amounted to about 945,000 Maria Theresa *thalers*, of which 462,000 of imports and 483,000 of exports.

During several years after this there was a slight increase, so that in the year 1904-1905 there was a movement of goods amounting to about 1,727,000 *thalers*.

After this slow increase the commerce of the Benadir went up suddenly in 1905-1906 to the figures never before reached, of 2,112,000 *thalers*. All the various articles of import and export, with the exception of a few products

in diminution for special causes, have been greatly in increase; therefore, we can safely conclude that the greater development of the commerce of the Benadir is lasting and due to a real improvement in the conditions of the country.

These deductions have been fully confirmed by the results of traffic during the financial year 1906-1907, just passed, which marks, with regard to the preceding one, a still greater increase of about 328,000 *thalers*, with a general total of 2,440,000 *thalers* divided as follows: 1,640,000 *thalers* of imports and about 800,000 *thalers* of exports.

Reduced to Italian liras these values correspond to the following: about 6,344,000 liras for the whole movement of traffic; 4,262,000 liras of imports and about 2,082,000 liras of exports.

The commercial movement of the Benadir has, therefore, experienced in the last decade an increase of 150 per cent., from 945,000 *thalers* to 2,240,000.

The principal articles of exportation are goat and camel skins, butter, cattle, camel grease, etc. The undressed skins which are exported go almost all to Zanzibar, whence they are sent mostly to America or Salonika. The butter is exported to Arabia and India. The commerce of cattle could be greatly increased if appropriately encouraged and fostered. South of the Juba and in the islands of Zanzibar, Seychelles, etc., cattle cannot live long, whence the necessity of importing the meat required for consumption. The Benadir, with over two million head of cattle, could provide almost the total amount needed by those countries. Nevertheless, the exportation of this produce is in constant diminution.

In the imports the first place is held by woven materials, (which represent about two-thirds of the total

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amount of imports), coffee, sugar, thread, tobacco, molasses, kerosene oil, etc.

Italian industry has tried to introduce national woven materials, but has not yet succeeded in overcoming the competition of American goods, also because it has not yet adopted the kind of packing required in those countries for the journey to the markets of the interior.

Coffee, of an inferior quality, is imported almost exclusively from Java, *via* Aden. Tobacco comes from Zanzibar.

The commerce of the Benadir must overcome serious obstacles :

(a) Between the coast and the markets of the interior, especially Lugh, centre of exchange for the imported and exported goods from Southern Ethiopia, there exist only a few and very bad caravan routes, along which the goods are carried on camels' backs, in difficult conditions and with great expense. The conditions of security are absolutely deficient and such as to not permit a peaceful development of commerce ; the frequent assaults on the part of tribes from the interior, and even near the coast on this side of the Webi Shebeli, prevent traders from transporting goods to and from the interior, which fact severely hinders the general movement of commerce.

(b) Our not being yet established all along the Webi Shebeli seriously harms the development of the Colony's commerce, as the exchange of goods wholesale is carried on along the Shebeli, where the price of the merchandise is fixed. The coast has to submit to what is done on the river.

(c) The lack of capital on the market and the scarceness of metallic currency foster illegal profits on the part of speculators, who buy up the products and trade them off at very high prices, bringing about a general limitation of consumption.

(d) The difficulty of finding anchorages, the lack of regular and direct lines of navigation and, therefore, the length of the journeys, the passing of goods from one ship to another in the intermediate ports, the very high freight rates, make it impossible for many products to be imported or exported from the Benadir, lessen for others the profits of the sale and limit generally the consumption.

From all that which precedes it is easy to gather what are the most urgent provisions needed for promoting the commerce of the Benadir. The enumeration of the causes which prevent its free development traces by itself the programme which we must unfold in that Colony.

For reasons of a political, commercial and military nature our occupation of the Webi-Shebeli, and our effective dominion over the Bimal tribe, have become imperative. This occupation may be effected in two ways : gradually, profiting by the favourable conditions which may present themselves, or suddenly, by a rapid advancing movement, breaking down all resistance and establishing ourselves in the principal points.

The second method is the one supported in the Senate by General Baldissera. The first method, which I have adopted, is the one in favour of which the three Governors, Mercatelli, Cerrina, and Carletti have successively pronounced themselves. We have already peacefully occupied Gilib on the coast, without meeting with any resistance, and shortly Danane will be occupied, where we shall take possession of the wells of the coast, to which the Bimals have recourse in the dry season for their cattle ; then we shall occupy Kaitoy on the Webi Shebeli, opposite Merka, and later also Afgoy and Gheledi, opposite Mogadiscio.

Commander Cerrina and Governor Carletti judge that in order to accomplish this we must increase our forces by at least 800 men, bringing their number to 3000. This

is provided for by the Bill I have presented, which also includes a subsequent increase of another 400 Ascaris, which will allow us to reinforce the garrisons and to establish a moving column which may go rapidly wherever it is needed.

It is foreseen that the occupation, moving from Merka towards the Webi Shebeli, which is at a distance of only twenty kilometers, without thick forests, and the inhabitants of which region have given friendly welcome to Governor Carletti, will be easy. It will instead be more difficult from Mogadiscio, because between that place and the Webi Shebeli the distance is double, because that region is covered by thick growths, which lend themselves to ambushes, and because the Wadan tribe, which is hostile to us and organized the massacre of the Cecchi expedition, resides there.

It is not impossible, therefore, that, in spite of the gradual and pacific character of the occupation, there may be some bloody conflicts. Well, if this should happen, we must be ready to receive the news of it with equanimity, because we are not going in for an action which can lead us into unexpected adventures nor entail heavy expenditure, such as the English have had to sustain in their expedition against the Mullah, or the Germans in their war against the Herreros. In our case we are undertaking a military operation in a limited zone which is an absolute necessity for the life of our Colony, and will have a peaceful character except for the isolated resistance it may encounter here and there.

The delaying this action too long, giving the tribes along the river the time to furnish themselves with arms and to come to an understanding with the Mullah, would expose us to serious dangers in the future. The question of the Mullah remains for us a dark point. Our

agreement with him was opportune, but it is known that standing by one's engagements is not in the habit of the Somalis. At all events, rather than wait and have on our hands at the same time the question of the Bimals and that of the Mullah, it is better to begin by solving the much easier question of the subjection of the Bimal tribe.

Only after the occupation of the Webi-Shebéli and the submission of this tribe shall we be in a position to efficiently protect the caravan routes from the coast to Lugh, establishing some fortified places, organizing escorts and increasing the vigilance upon custom dues and commerce.

Previously to May, 1905—that is to say, at the time of the Company's administration—the troops of the Benadir numbered from 800 to 1000 native men, under the command of Italian officers, whose number varied from 3 to 8. To-day we have 2442 Ascaris with 30 Italian officers. When the Bill I have presented will be enacted, there will be 3400 Ascaris with 46 Italian officers.

At the time of the Company's administration the armed force was gathered in groups entrusted essentially with the protection of the city gates. To-day the troops are regularly distributed and gathered in six companies, one of which is an artillery company, which are distributed in eleven garrisons. They are well equipped and well instructed, and answer perfectly to the various military tasks required of them—marches, manœuvres, escorts, combat, etc.

As to the quality of the Ascaris a great improvement has been effected. Twice I had occasion to pronounce in this Chamber words of severe condemnation of the Company's Ascaris. The Company recruited them everywhere, among Somalis, Eritreans, Suahelis, and Arabs,

regardless of age, so much so that some of them were seventy years old, and there were even some among them who were blind and lame. Their instruction was inadequate, their military spirit very scarce, and their uncleanliness disgusting.

The Eritreans, the majority of whom were Christians, besides suffering from homesickness, were also a cause of discord on account of the difference of religion ; the Somalis showed little courage and the Suahelis even less.

To-day 95 per cent. of our Ascaris are recruited in Arabia, in Yemen, and in Hadramaut, among young men. They have much endurance, are easily instructed, become attached to their officers, and do not lose that special characteristic of their race, courage.

To demonstrate how our Ascaris behave with discipline and intrepidity in battle, I will read a passage from the report of Commander Cerrina upon the Danane encounter :

“ . . . The troops in their turn, so well directed, behaved always splendidly, be it for individual courage, collective discipline, be it for calm precision of range, so that the number of shots fired was relatively small, as the troops never allowed themselves to be overcome by the frenzy of firing. This has been obtained through the assiduous work of all the officers in command of the companies, that has transformed into very good soldiers those same elements which, at the time of the Company's administration, had, for their indiscipline and disorganization, inspired in all quarters so little confidence.”

To-day the pay given to the Ascaris is seven Maria Theresa *thalers* a month, (about 204 liras annually), while that given by the Company varied between 144 and 180 liras annually.

We must admit that even the actual pay is very small and constitutes one of the essential difficulties to recruiting.



Certainly it will not be possible to remain in the present conditions, which clash with those of the adjoining colonies, where the colonial troops are better paid. I propose to study the opportunity of a colonial understanding among the States which have possessions adjoining ours, in order to establish a common medium scale of pay.

The public works which have been recently executed regard principally the construction of barracks for the Ascaris, the widening of markets, the building of the infirmaries of Merka and Brava, and the colonial hospital to be erected at Mogadiscio. In the plan of conventions with commercial companies for the Benadir, however, an expenditure of six millions, divided over a decade, for public works which were to consist in the construction of ports such as to render landing possible during the period of closed coasts, and in railway constructions, had been contemplated. Such a sum was to be advanced by the companies or raised on a loan.

As to the railway, I think that we should take the port of Brava as a starting point, connecting it at present with Bardera and reserving for a second period its prolongation as far as Lugh. In the meantime, however, it is urgently necessary to improve the caravan routes between Lugh and the coast, providing at the same time for their security.

New light has been thrown on the question of ports by the studies made upon the subject by Commander Cerrina. I have had occasion at other times to praise this able officer, to whom the administration of the Benadir Colony was at one time temporarily entrusted. I am glad to be able to repeat to-day how greatly his studies and observations assist us in perfecting the organization of the Colony. Every one knows that from October to April,

during the north-eastern Monsoon, we have a period of open coasts, and that from May to September, during the south-western Monsoon, there is a period of closed coast. From observations made during 1906, Commander Cerrina has come to the conclusion, however, that this closing of the coast is not absolute, and that according to the various localities there are a number of days, which vary for each place, but never too short of consecutive days even, in which communications between the ships at anchor and the coast are possible. He thinks, as Filonardi did before him, that it would be comparatively easy to construct a port at Itala, but justly excludes that locality on account of its distance from the centres of traffic and its little commercial importance.

He excludes Mogadiscio and Merka absolutely, as to his mind they are not adapted for the construction of any important port works, which would require large sums and would give poor results. He believes in the usefulness and possibility of constructing a port at Brava, when the commerce of the Benadir will have assumed greater proportions. In this sense more detailed studies will be made at present, and in the meantime the application of the minimum programme proposed by Commander Cerrina will be started, that is to say, the construction of landing pontoons and the erection of lighthouses at Brava, Merka, and Mogadiscio.

For Mogadiscio, Signor Albertazzi, the engineer, had made some studies in March, 1904, for a series of works to be divided in two parts, estimating a cost of 240,000 lires for the first, and 800,000 for the second part. At Brava, Signor Albertazzi estimated that for 800,000 lires we could have a port capable of receiving ships of medium tonnage the whole year round. In the meanwhile the royal ship "*Staffetta*" is executing some preparatory hydro-

graphical works, and some studies upon the currents of that littoral. When we shall be ready to begin the works upon the port of Brava and the Brava-Bardera Railway, a loan will have to be raised which will be gradually extinguished by the Colonial Budget.

After the march forward to the Webi-Shebéli we shall have to study the hydraulic system of that river that has so great an importance for the agricultural improvement of that region. But, as I shall show later when speaking of Eritrea, while the hydraulic works which are necessary in that country are huge and very costly, those required in the Benadir are easy, and entail but small expenditure. There is only one question the solution of which is not clear, and it is that of the Gofka Canal, to which several speakers have alluded in this discussion, repeating what had been so often said, and what I also believed to be the case before any one had visited the canal, because for a long time we have spoken of it without having studied the matter on the spot.

In the sitting of March 14th, 1904, I made the following remark: "There is the reopening of the Gofka Canal, which has so great a part in the fertility of the land in the region of the Thuns. That Canal was in operation until thirty years ago; the Bimal tribe, wishing to monopolize the waters and to prevent their flowing into the region of the Thuns, its enemies, obstructed it. Now, the first thing, in order to reopen the Gofka Canal, would be to remove this obstruction."

Governor Carletti, however, has been able to verify during his journey along the Webi-Shebéli that it is not merely a question of removing an obstruction, as had been believed so far; because the Gofka, which is reduced at present simply to a trench, has its bed seven or eight meters above the water-level of the Webi-Shebéli. It

will, therefore, be necessary for this problem to be studied on the spot by a technical expert.

The remaining hydraulic works to be executed, especially in the Gofka, are not of great importance. Such is the conviction formed in his journey by Governor Carletti, who concludes one of his reports to me with the following words : " By means of canals derived from the Juba, which can be constructed with little cost and not much labour, this region will have a wonderful agricultural development, and will be transformed in one of the most productive cotton-growing zones known."

As to the lighthouse at Cape Guardafui, we are still negotiating with England.

In regard to the shipping services, while there is at present no direct line between Italy and the Benadir, according to the new Maritime Conventions approved by the Chamber, we shall have a monthly service, starting one month from Genoa, the following month from Venice, and so on, stopping after Massawa at the ports of Assab, Aden, Jibuti, Zeila, Mogadiscio, Merka, Brava, Kismayu, Zanzibar. This line, proposed by me, was willingly accepted by my colleague the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs.

There is always the contract with the Cowasjee firm, which, in consequence of an annual subsidy of 58,500 liras, makes nine trips a year during the period of open coast between Zanzibar and Aden and *vice versa*, with compulsory stops at Mogadiscio, Merka, and Brava, and optional ones at Obbia, Itala and Bander Kassim. Upon the expiration of the present contract this service will have to be considerably improved.

The ever more rapid increase of our emigration imposes upon the Government the solution of the problem as to whether it be not possible to utilize it by opening fresh

outlets to it, by which it be not lost to the Mother Country. It is therefore of the greatest importance to examine if cultivation by a permanent population of labourers be possible in the Benadir, if, in other words, this region can become for Italy a colony which she can people with her own emigrants.

Experience has shown that in order to be adapted to such a purpose colonies must possess climatic conditions and natural resources akin to those enjoyed by Europeans, that they must hold vast tracts of fertile and vacant land, with a very limited density of population.

That these conditions are found in the Benadir has by this time been proved by a whole literature of our own, consisting of monographs by scholars on these subjects, of special analyses and reports by experts, as well as those made by our own officials.

The Benadir is considered by the natives as the climatic station of Eastern Africa. Although it belongs to the inter-tropical zone, the alternating of Monsoons produces in that region a constant and healthy aeration and keeps the temperature considerably below what could be expected at such a low latitude. The periodical and regular rainy seasons never reach the harmful excesses of other equatorial colonies, in comparison to which the Benadir has a much smaller degree of atmospheric humidity. The health conditions of the Europeans who have resided there on the Italian ships, as well as on the coast and in the interior, were constantly excellent; the activity of the whites is not subject to the exhaustion of tropical climates, and only here and there do we come across a hot-bed of malaria.

The fertility of the soil is affirmed by all explorers, has been verified by chemical analyses made of the soil itself, and by the encouraging results of the experiments

made by Signor Carpanetti. All the zone which extends itself inland from the coast for over one hundred kilometers on the left of the Juba as far as Ghelib and beyond has proved to be fully adapted to all the great tropical cultures. It has all the characteristics of fertile lands ; it is flat, free from gravel, therefore easy to redeem. The indispensable irrigation is assured by two large rivers, the Juba and the Webi-Shebeli, from which derivations may easily be obtained, as for long tracts of land the waters are on a level with the surrounding country. These two constant and abundant watercourses determine favourable hydrometric conditions in the subsoil, so that springs and wells of potable water are frequent in that region.

The density of population, given the agricultural nature of the country, is considerable, especially in the most fertile regions. There would always remain, however, vast tracts of land at our disposal, when the reservations to be left to the natives should be rendered more productive by rational methods of culture.

As to the foodstuffs required by the farmers, the land can grow corn, vegetables, maize, and a great deal of cattle can be raised upon it.

Still, before directing our emigration to the Benadir, it will be necessary to study the question better, because the difficulties to be overcome are not slight. First of all, we must remember that in those regions work is looked down upon and is left to inferior races and to slaves. Therefore, the Italian agricultural population would be lacking in the eyes of the Somalis of that *prestige* which is necessary to the European in order to impress himself upon the native element, numerically superior. This fact would, moreover, have an unfavourable influence upon the security of the inhabitants of the Colony, taking

also into account that security is more scarce in the Benadir than in British and German East Africa on account of the different races inhabiting it.

The Juba has marked approximately the limit of the migrations northwards of the Bankè race, which is peaceful and devoted to agriculture, and of the southward migration of the Euro-African race, which is nomad and warlike. Therefore, the zone situated in the triangle Jumbo-Ghelid-Brava, inhabited by the freedmen of Gosha, by the Thuns, presents greater security, which decreases as one proceeds northwards and towards the interior. To the natural pride of the natives is added religious fanaticism, which justifies any system of struggle against the *Kaffir* from open warfare to treacherous murder.

Nor must we overlook the economical side of the question. Emigration promoted by the commercial enterprises started in the Colony would not thrive for several reasons, which can be readily guessed. The employment of the labour of natives, of freedmen, and of the inferior Suaheli race will always be much less costly and more convenient. The only opening which remains, therefore, is for small families which would cultivate on their own account small pieces of land adapted to that purpose. Now, the calculations made in the adjoining English colony have established 750 pounds sterling (18,750 lires) as the sum necessary for a European farmer to settle in that region with the comforts which are necessary to him, begin the clearing, tillage, and sowing of a piece of land, and to await the harvest.

Even reducing this amount in consideration of the smaller needs of our farmers, the Italian emigrant does not possess this sum. The Emigration Fund would then have to come to his assistance. I opposed the proposal to use that Fund for a similar purpose in South America.

I should, on the contrary, favour its investment in one of our colonies. I will then say, concluding, that the Italian colonization of the Benadir will in time be possible, and that we must in the meanwhile prepare favourable conditions for it. When these will have been obtained, the Governor will make the necessary arrangements with the General Emigration Bureau.

I come now to the cultivation of cotton. I think it useful to here set before you some technical observations, because it is known that this cultivation gives large profits, and I want my words to encourage all those who in Italy have capital and initiative, to employ their activities in the Colony.

The Colony of the Benadir would acquire great importance for Italy if it could supply the raw material for some of our most flourishing industries, which import it at present from foreign countries. First among these stands the cotton industry, which in January, 1906, was represented in Italy by 780 factories with over 140,000 workmen and an importation of 1,650,691 quintals of raw material, against an exportation of woven and spun goods of 84,352 quintals, for a sum of over 100,000,000 liras.

Very useful for the cultivation of cotton in the Benadir are the studies and experiments made by the English Government in the adjoining "*East Africa Protectorate*." Mr. Brand, in a Report submitted to Parliament by the Foreign Office, calculates the cost of cultivation at 135 Italian liras per hectare, a sum which ploughing could reduce by 40 per cent., and which, at all events, proves inferior to that required for the cultivation of cotton in Egypt.

But the climatic conditions of the Benadir make this cultivation much more profitable there than in the



adjoining British colony, as we count upon the easily obtainable irrigation from the Juba and the Webi-Shebeli, which hold an abundance of water and are more important than the Tana and the Sabaki, the two rivers of the British East Africa Protectorate available for the same purpose.

The very recent examination of the soil made by Professor Fanelli brings us also to the conclusion that it lends itself admirably to the cultivation of cotton, an industry which formed in olden times one of the most active sources of wealth for the ports of the Benadir.

Signor Carpanetti has been the first who in 1906 tried the cultivation of cotton for industrial purposes upon a tract of land of seven hectares. He chose, for a first experiment, Tarda in the Gosha, on the left bank of the Juba, a locality within the triangle Jumbo-Ghelid-Brava, the most suitable because inhabited by a peaceful and not too thick agricultural population, as the first place where it would be possible to begin a partial importation of Italian labour.

The types experimented upon were an American "*long fibre*," two Egyptian varieties, and an Australian "*hybrid*," and they all gave excellent results, without losing any of their original characteristics.

On the contrary, the two Egyptian types ("*Metafifi*" and "*Abassi*") surpassed in excellence the same varieties cultivated in Egypt, the first by 5.27 per cent., and the second by 1.97 per cent.

Even the quantity of the production (about 540 kilogrammes per hectare) surpassed the normal productive power obtained elsewhere by cotton farmers, and the quotations went up from 90 liras per quintal for the Italian type, to 103 for the American, and 210 for the Egyptian qualities.

Upon close examination the "*Metafifi*" sample, which

is among the best Egyptian types, was recognized superior to the corresponding qualities known and classified as first-class ; the "*Abassi*" type was also judged excellent. The American "*long fibre*" sample was found instead relatively inferior, but it is well to note that this type is the only one possible in countries which cannot be irrigated and must depend on the rainy season alone for cultivation, and that it is possible to improve its quality by ploughing and proper manuring.

On account of the general nature of these experiments it was impossible to establish the exact limits of the profits of such cultivation. Signor Borzi, however, who examined the samples obtained by Signor Carpanetti, agrees with the latter in his conclusions as to considering these experiments most encouraging, such as to render the cultivation of cotton in the Benadir advisable, and as to assure its being amply remunerative.

The system I have preferred for the concessions has been that of the emphyteutic lease, inasmuch as it protects both the interests of the emphyteuton, allowing him to draw a profit from the land he has improved, and those of the State that will one day be once more in possession of the land, the value of which will be greatly enhanced.

We have actually in the Benadir only the Carpanetti concession, which I have already submitted to Parliament as a rider to the Bill upon the Colonial Budgets ; besides which three other concessions (Afan de Rivera, Fanelli, and Scoch) may be considered as virtually granted. Another fifteen requests are under consideration, and already several of these parties have gone to the Colony to make final arrangements with the Governor.

The Carpanetti concession has a provisional character ; because, before making it final, it will be necessary to establish the land *régime* of the colony. This should have

preceded the granting of any concession of land, but we were in the presence of this dilemma : either solve at once the land problem, that is to say, precipitately, and without an exact knowledge of the *de facto* conditions existing in the Benadir, or lose the opportunity of encouraging this private initiative, which is an expression of the country's interest in the Colony, an interest that it is necessary to foster.

These first concessions will also be of great assistance to us in solving the land problem, first of all because the obligation imposed upon the grantee of making a survey of the land for which he has a concession will prepare the formation of the *Colonial Register of the Survey of Lands*, which is indispensable. The relations between the grantees and the natives will give us also the most exact criterions for the demarcation of the Crown lands, according to the modifications made to Mussulman Law by local habits and customs, and will allow us to fix with greater certainty the vacant territories and the rights and reservations of the natives.

Having published the text of the Carpanetti concession in the Parliamentary Acts, I will not stop here to mention its conditions and to comment upon it in detail. It represents the type which I shall take as a model for future concessions and, synthetically, this is its mechanism.

One thousand hectares of land are granted, carrying this extension to five thousand hectares and the concession itself to a period of ninety-nine years, if, after three years the grantee will have cleared and cultivated 400 hectares of land, (100 in the first year, 100 in the second, 200 in the third), making the concession subject to clauses which determine the progressive improvement and cultivation of larger tracts of land. Moreover, Signor Carpanetti undertakes to spend upon the land

during the first five years a sum of at least 300,000 liras. I have published the Carpanetti concession because, except for such modifications as experience may suggest, it is, to my mind, the type of concession which we must grant in the Colony.

England, Germany, and France also demand, with some small difference of detail, that the grantee really improve the land in gradually increasing proportions ; England, however, has, in common with us, the idea of increasing the size of the grant only when a portion of the land has been already improved ; Germany leaves it to the Governor to fix the amount of land which shall be progressively improved, and France changes the lease into absolute ownership for those zones which the grantee has effectively improved. We may add that in the Congo State one half of the land granted by the concession must be improved within the first six years.

In the Carpanetti concession the period of exemption from taxes is doubled if there be employed upon the land granted a certain number of families of Italian farmers, with a total number of at least fifteen men. This clause has been added because, white labour being more costly than native labour, we have meant to favour the grantee who thus gradually starts Italian emigration and colonization in that region.

We have, lastly, a very important question to consider, that of the colonial credit system, which has been treated by the Hon. De Marinis in his report upon the Bill for the organization of the Benadir.

The questions to be answered are two. Would the establishment of Institutes of Colonial Credit solve the problem of the development of our colonies ? And secondly : Do there exist in our colonies conditions of economic development such as to justify such a measure ?

Inasmuch as regards the granting of credit to private individuals in the Eritrea Colony, we have already a series of investigations made in order to establish the opportunity, if any, of opening there a branch of the "*Banca d'Italia*" (Bank of Italy).

For the Benadir no investigations have been made. Commerce still proceeds in that region upon rudimentary systems, and payments for goods coming from the interior are made mostly, not with money, but with the exchange of other goods. As to agricultural credit, before doing anything along this line it will be necessary to have farmers, and how this may take place in the future has already been pointed out by me.

But the Hon. De Marinis refers more particularly to public credit, rendered possible by the autonomy of a colony.

It is from the French colonies that the Hon. de Marinis draws the examples which he quotes in support of his argument. Colonial credit has there passed through three successive stages: Credit obtained—(1) by the State for the colony; (2) directly by the colony, but with a guarantee from the State; (3) by the colony without any guarantee from the State.

The first period is characterized by the fact that the Budget of the colony is only a part of the State's Budget, and, therefore, the loans raised by the colony are one with those raised by the State. To render the passage to the second form of public credit possible, it is necessary to apply to the colony the system of autonomy. But it is also evident that the application of this system would not be possible in a colony which had not yet reached a degree of development such as to allow it to suffice to itself. At any rate, even being autonomous, the colony does not find credit at first, except through a guarantee from the

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State. This guarantee by the State takes different forms ; either by the disbursement of a given sum annually (Sudan), or by pledging the customs receipts (Guinea and Congo), or by an undertaking from the Mother Country to pay that portion of the loan, for the reimbursement of which the colony's resources should prove insufficient (Madagascar and Tonkin).

The third form of colonial public credit is exemplified by the loan of 200,000,000 lires, alluded to by the Hon. De Marinis, contracted by Indo-China, without any guarantee by the State.

There is in France a strong tendency to spread this system, and there is a plan, supported by many, of establishing a general Colonial Bank, which would discuss the conditions of the loan with the local authorities and would place it on the market under the form of a public subscription.

That the actual conditions of capital in Italy are such as to discourage the floating of a loan with any probability of success, is an affirmation that does not need much demonstration. In fact, the difficulties encountered by the "*Banca d'Italia*" (Bank of Italy) in order to place at the disposal of the Eritrean Government the sum of 17,000,000 lires—which would yet constitute a loan guaranteed by the State—for public works required in the colony, in accordance with the law of 1903, are well known.

In order to reach practical conclusions it appears necessary to us, first, to place the problem of the development of our colonies upon solid bases, and, then, to face the problem of colonial credit. Before establishing colonial credit we must create the indispensable elements for its existence.

Honourable Members ! I have done my best to give

a complete and true exposition of all the questions concerning the Colony of the Benadir. It was an arduous task on account of the importance and complexity of the questions themselves and of the no slight difficulties which their solution presents. You shall judge if I have been able to accomplish it.

#### XI. SITTING OF JUNE 25TH, 1909—(CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES)

The agricultural concessions in the Benadir—Type of concession adopted and its advantages—Modifications to the Carpanetti contract—The land problem—The clearings already executed and those decided upon—The efficiency of the Ascaris as compared to the Eritrean troops—Opinions by Comm. Cerrina, Governor Carletti, Comm. di Giorgio, and Chev. Macchioro—The noteworthy increase of this corps and improvements effected—The cost of the occupation of the Webi-Shebeli—Comparisons with England and Germany.

The agricultural concessions have given occasion to many polemics in the newspapers, which have lasted for some time. The Hon. Chiesi has in his speech mentioned these concessions with severe criticism. It is, therefore, worth while for me to speak of them somewhat at length, after having recalled with satisfaction an interview, published some time ago in a newspaper, by Senator De Martino, who rectified several incorrect statements which had been published.

Following upon my colonial speech of February, 1908, a spontaneous awakening of our national energies towards our colonies manifested itself, and I deemed it wise to grant the several requests for concessions received by me, without waiting for the final settlement of the land *régime* in Somaliland, as I thought it inadvisable to

discourage these first initiatives and to condemn the Colony to remain unproductive until the land *régime* should have been prepared, discussed, and published.

In studying what type of concession to adopt, always assisted by the unanimous opinion of the Colonial Council, I have been obliged to recognize that, in the exceptional granting of this first group of concessions, it would be necessary to place the grantee in the best possible conditions for the development of his enterprise, since the whole future of the colony would rest upon the result of these first cultivations; because, given the impressionability of Italian public opinion, their failure would have marked the end of all confidence in our possession and the giving up of every initiative for its improvement.

In the present conditions of the Colony it was not possible to adopt the system of small concessions upon the basis of a white colonization, although this form should doubtless be aimed at as an ultimate end. To-day it is necessary for every farmer to possess a not indifferent capital in order to meet the heavy expense of the trip, settlement and initial difficulties of life in the Colony; the important investment of funds for the construction of farm-houses, purchase of agricultural implements, etc., the initial cost of cultivation and the laying in of the provisions necessary to him and which cannot be found on the spot.

Being obliged, therefore, to exclude these small grants of land, and not being able, on the other hand, to count upon the formation of any large company, the Government, in accordance with the opinion of the Colonial Council, has adopted for the improvement of the 50,000 hectares of land at our disposal in the Gosha, a single type of concession, having an extension of 5000 hectares, with the obligation on the part of the grantee of gradually



improving and cultivating this land during a period of ten years, at the expiration of which the whole cultivable area must have been placed under cultivation and a capital of at least 500,000 liras expended upon it.

The extension of 5000 hectares has been recognized without hesitation as that which answers best to the following ends :

(1) It allows the Government to demand from the grantees the possession of an initial capital adequate for the heavy expenses of first establishment, for the purchase of agricultural machines and appliances, and for the first years of cultivation :

(2) Owing to the possession of such capital, the eventual failure of the first crops, which would mean the ruin of a small family of farmers, with a capital of 20,000 or 30,000 liras, will not prevent the continuation of the cultivations :

(3) It allows each grantee, within the radius of his 5000 hectares, to select for the first cultivation that piece of land in which the excellence of the soil can compensate the initial difficulties and lack of experience, while assuming the consecutive improvement of a vast zone of surrounding territory ; an advantage which could not have been had in the granting of small concessions, which would have taken up the most fertile tracts of land, leaving unproductive all the surrounding ones :

(4) Finally, it gives these grantees, in case of success, as a just premium for their initiative, a wide margin of profits, which would encourage fresh investments in the Colony and would, therefore, serve for its ultimate improvement.

Having adopted this type of concession of 5000 hectares we had at our disposal in the Goshia ten pieces of land—besides the one granted two years ago to Signor

Carpanetti—with which the Government has endeavoured to satisfy all the requests received from those who had given proof of seriousness and steadfastness of purpose by going to the colony to complete on the spot the preparatory studies. In fact, it has succeeded in uniting these parties into groups, in such a manner as to devote to the improvement of the land granted by each concession the maximum of individual energies which have offered themselves.

Of these grantees, some have already gone to the Colony to make experiments, others will go there at the re-opening of the coast to take final possession of the land and to initiate with the beginning of the new agricultural year the cultivation of it, according to the terms and in the manner established by the contract.

The actual system adopted by the Government does not exclude, however, that, alongside with these large concessions, we may not grant small pieces of land to farmers, who through knowledge of the places and special experience acquired should offer probabilities of making a success of their venture. In fact, we are about to grant the concession for two pieces of land of 500 hectares each in the vicinity of Jumbo and one for 800 hectares near Brava.

In my speech of February, 1908, I had occasion to lay before the Chamber the terms of the Carpanetti contract. This has served as a model for the subsequent contracts, to which we have, however, made some modifications. Without stopping to speak of the minor details, I will mention only the principal modifications. First of all, instead of being granted for ninety-nine years, the concession has a duration of only sixty years, a term which seems sufficient to give the grantee an opportunity of reaping an ample profit from the capital employed,

without depriving the colonial Government for an excessively long period of the lands, which will then have acquired a greatly enhanced value.

In establishing the obligations assumed by the grantee in connection with the effective improvement of the land granted, we have arranged things in such a way as to make these obligations as light as possible in the beginning, and to let them become gradually heavier in the succeeding years, that is to say when, the possibilities of the cultivations having been ascertained, the grantee will have been able with the experience acquired and with the funds drawn from the concession itself or obtained from the capitalists encouraged by his success, to give a greater impulse to the enterprise.

With the purpose of favouring the establishment of Italian farmers, who, adapting themselves to local conditions, and becoming experienced in tropical cultivation, may later on establish small farms of their own and thus prepare the way for the colonization by whites, which is the ultimate end the Government should have in view, it has been decided in the contract that the period of complete exemption from the land-tax will be extended from five to ten years for those grantees who will import at their expense and will employ on the land granted a certain number of families of Italian farmers, with not less than fifteen adult, able-bodied men.

The Hon. Chiesa has bitterly criticized the disposition protecting the rights of third parties on the lands granted, for the consequences of which the Government in no case assumes any responsibility, until such time as the demarcation of the Colony's Crown lands shall have been accomplished. This disposition is a necessary consequence of the granting of concessions before the settlement of the land *régime* of the Colony. It is a forestalled declaration,

which is determined by the political necessities in which the Government might find itself in relation to the native proprietors. The grantees have been informed of this fact from the very first; it has not discouraged them and they have always strongly insisted upon receiving the concession of the land.

However, if it is not possible to foresee when we shall be able to provide for the formation upon rational bases of the Colony's *Register of the Survey of Land*, it may be safely said that in the zone of the granted concessions the formation of this *Register* will take place progressively and without any expense, through the action of the grantees themselves, upon whom we have imposed the obligation of sending in to the Government, within a given limit of time, the topographical survey of the land granted.

In the meanwhile, we should bear in mind that before the settlement of the land *régime* for the zone granted will have taken place, the grantee will have cultivated only a few hundred hectares of the 5000 granted; that, therefore, it appears highly improbable that the eventual rights, which may have escaped to our preceding, accurate examination of titles, should refer to those very pieces of land; that, finally, even were this to take place, the Government would certainly, in the present conditions of the Colony, be in a position to find an equitable solution. It is clear, therefore, that the clause in question, while juridically and politically necessary and useful as an incentive to a scrupulous ascertaining of title in the act of demarcation of the land, cannot form a serious obstacle to cultivation. Proof of this are the numerous offers of individual energies which from all parts of Italy have been turned to the improvement of the land in Gosha, accepting straight off the actual contract of concession.

The Hon. Chiesa has offered another criticism upon the agricultural concessions, affirming they have been granted with too great an extension along the banks of the river, so that when the latter has been all taken up it will be impossible to irrigate the land which has no water front upon the river itself.

But we have thought of this in time. Already since May, 1908, the Governor advised me that some of the parties who had made request for a concession of land, having visited the Colony, had ventured to express the extraordinary pretension of wanting the whole of the concession to be granted lengthwise along the river-bank, and that he had given dispositions to the effect that in no case should a concession occupy along the river-bank more than one side of the square within which the whole of the land granted was to be contained.

Not satisfied with this, on July 21st, 1908, when notifying the Governor of my decisions concerning the granting of ten concessions for 5000 hectares each, I wrote him in the following terms :

“The object of Your Excellency's greatest care will have to be that the demarcation of these pieces of land do not lead in practice to the monopolizing of the river itself on the part and for the exclusive benefit of those grantees who are among the first to arrive. The river zone will, therefore, have to be limited for each to that tract of land, which, upon the basis of the special conditions of each concession, shall be considered necessary for its irrigation and improvement.”

Subsequently I repeatedly confirmed these instructions, until I received a Report which informed me of the demarcations executed, notifying me that it had been impossible to rigidly apply my instructions to the first concessions granted, owing to the insufficient depth of

the land between the river and the downs, but that it would be possible to act upon them beginning from the sixth concession.

In any case the possibility of irrigating the land lying back of these concessions has not been prejudiced, because the derivation of water from the Juba is a Government concession, and because a zone of one hundred meters placed between each of the pieces of land granted, makes it always possible to dig canals which would irrigate the territories lying behind those actually granted.

It is known that the region lying between the downs and the Shebeli is covered with thick woods and shrubbery, which are very propitious for ambushes. The paths which lead through them from the inhabited centres along the river to those on the coast are so narrow that for long spaces they give passage to only one person at a time, so that moving columns and caravans, thus lengthened out of every proportion, are exposed to dangerous ambushes even on the part of a few men.

All those who have written and spoken about the Benadir with some competency have recognized that the clearing of this land was absolutely indispensable for the security of communications between the coast and the river. I believe, therefore, that it will interest the Chamber and the country to know what has been done. The labour of clearing has been imposed as a punishment upon the rebellious tribes which have been subjugated. At the middle of last March the clearing had been executed along the paths which join the following localities :

- (1) Mogadiscio-Afgoy, with the understanding that the passage already cleared be widened in as brief a space of time as possible, which is already being done on the Afgoy side, the work being executed by the Wadan tribe ;
- (2) Afgoy-Barire, a clearing of sufficient width, executed

by the people of Merere, and of unquestionable utility for communications and for the rapid concentration of the two garrisons on the river ;

(3) Barire-Danane, a clearing also of sufficient width (in some places of about 50 metres) ;

(4) Merka-front of Kaitoy, recently begun and carried on with alacrity under the vigilant care of our Resident at Merka.

The following clearings are decided upon and will be shortly carried out :—

(a) Mogadiscio-Darerta-Ghet-Faki Balad ;

(b) Jesiria-Derdif-Adadle-Afgoy ;

(c) Kaitoy-Mallable ;

(d) Brava-Havai (for a certain distance).

The information which the Hon. Chiesa has had concerning the Ascaris, of which he has said every possible evil, are evidently of a very ancient date. They must refer to the Ascaris of the old "*Benadir Company*," of which I have myself spoken in this Chamber in very severe terms. But already in my speech of 1908 I pointed out the great improvement obtained and quoted a very flattering opinion expressed with regard to them after the Danane encounter by Commander Cerrina, who remarked in his Report that the assiduous care of our officers had transformed into excellent soldiers those same elements which at the time of the Company's administration inspired no confidence whatever.

It is noteworthy that Governor Carletti and Major Di Giorgio are of one accord in their praises of the Ascaris. In one of his Reports upon the occupation of the Webi-Shebéli, Governor Carletti expresses himself as follows : " In these operations for the occupation of the lower Shebéli, as well as in the following ones against the Der-vishes of the Gheledi-Afgoy region, shone the virtues above

all praise of our officers and the qualities of resistance, discipline and dash of the old and trusted Eritrean troops, as well as of the young Ascaris of Benadir, who proved themselves worthy of fighting beside the former and confirmed the fame acquired in the preceding combats of Gilib, Egalla, Danane, Dongad, and Mellet."

And Major Di Giorgio in his recent Report upon the encounters of July 11th and 12th says :

" The Eritrean troops have proved themselves in these two brief and decisive combats worthy of their fame. The Ascaris of Italian Somaliland have shown less dash, but more discipline, more order ; they have acted splendidly in the hands of their officers and in these regions I prefer them. A fine proof of their military spirit lies in the regret they manifested at having suffered no losses, either during the first or second day of combat. These two days were most fatiguing : ten hours of marching and fighting on the 11th, thirteen on the 12th, and not one man remained behind. They returned in just as good conditions as the Eritreans, whose fame as marchers is well known."

As I mean to be impartial and objective I will not refrain from saying that Major Rossi has expressed an unfavourable opinion of the Ascaris. This opinion is not shared, however, by Chev. Macchioro, who, in a recent report dated April 18th, 1909, writes :

" The Eritrean troops for physical stateliness of appearance, ease of bearing, accuracy of uniform and military spirit present themselves in fact better than the Arab troops. But this does not mean that on the one side are all the virtues and on the other all the faults. I have followed our Arabs during several days of fatiguing marches, during which it has not always been possible to distribute the ordinary rations of food, and I have not noticed in them any lack of resistance or of discipline.



I have instead had occasion to admire the cold blood and order with which, in occasion of two nightly alarms, they took up their positions of defence along the improvised "*zeriba*," and I must say that, in general, I have received a good impression of these soldiers."

Having said this much I will briefly expose what has been done since I last spoke to the Chamber in February, 1908, of the question of the Ascaris.

In February, 1908, the Ascaris of Italian Somaliland numbered 2442 men with 30 officers, gathered in 6 companies, (of which one an artillery company), and distributed in 12 garrisons.

I announced then that the number of Ascaris would have been increased to 3400 with 46 officers. Now, from the latest Reports, it results that on April 1st, 1909, we had in the Benadir 3535 Ascaris, (independently of the 230 natives belonging to the Police Corps, and of the 163 Ascaris of the Moving Militia, at present under arms), gathered into ten companies—of which one an artillery company—distributed in 16 garrisons with 59 Italian officers.

In November last, moreover, a band of 400 Gheledis with 20 of our native petty officers was formed, with the purpose of better protecting their villages against the Dervishes coming from the Mullah's camp, and their fanatical followers.

The increase in the number of garrisons, and consequently of the Ascaris has been required by the occupation of the Webi-Shebéli. Recruiting has been carried on for the greater part in Yemen and at Aden, as in the past. Having found direct recruiting more difficult in the Yemen, however, we had to take a greater number of recruits from Aden, where there is not always an affluence of men available for the purpose.

Having found out by experience from the sojourn in

Somaliland of four Eritrean Companies that the latter element, when Mussulman, gives excellent results in Somaliland, in order to complete the necessary contingent, I have proceeded to the enlistment in Eritrea of 400 Mussulman Ascaris, preferring those discharged from military service, and therefore already accustomed to military discipline.

This nucleus constitutes a useful example for the Arab troops, which are constantly gaining in discipline under the able guidance of our officers.

The equipment and arms of the troops have been much improved ; the latter have been changed, the ammunition greatly increased in quantity as well as the number of guns for the artillery ; we have provided horses for four movable artillery pieces ; the permanent establishment of a caravan of 135 camels for the refurnishment of the Afgoy and Barire garrisons on the Webi-Shebéli has also been provided for.

To show that the expenditure of about two million lires, which is the cost of our occupation of the Webi-Shebéli, has been really very slight when we consider the results obtained, I think it opportune to establish a few comparisons with what England—who has in colonial matters a preparedness so much superior to ours—has spent in similar occasions.

From 1898 to 1905, on the right bank of the Juba, under our very eyes, England attempted a programme of penetration similar to ours, from the coast to the interior towards the Boran, with operations against the rebellious Ogadens. In two expeditions the English spent fourteen million lires, without obtaining their end. The Bimal and other tribes which we have had to subdue are populations no less difficult to manage than the Ogadens of the right bank of the Juba.

In British Somaliland England spent for the two Manning and Egerton expeditions of 1902-1903, and 1903-1904, more than 62 million liras. Such is the figure mentioned by the Secretary of State for War, Mr. Arnold Foster in the sitting of May, 1905, in the House of Commons.

The German Empire has spent 335 million marks to subdue the revolt of the Herreros, thus divided :

98,350,000	marks	in	1904
115,500,000	„	„	1905
120,350,000	„	„	1906

Adding to this the expense of the complementary war against the Hottentots we reach the half milliard.

I will close with an observation. The Hon. Chiesa has been this time much less severe in his anti-colonial affirmations. At least he has not spoken of the colonies with the marked aversion of other times. It has seemed to me that, in occupying himself with colonial matters, the colonial passion is beginning to seize him as well. Well, it would not be the first conversion. The Hon. Martini went to Eritrea an anti-colonialist and returned a convinced Africanist. The much lamented Gustavo Chiesi, from being a convinced anti-colonialist became a fervent Africanist and lost his life in those lands of which he felt all the deep fascination. I myself, as a Member of Parliament, remember having more than once spoken of the colonies with no great amount of sympathy.

But let this be said quite incidentally. I have merely meant to affirm that the colonial question is one of those problems which fascinate and invite us to seek its solution and as such it is worthy of a nation with high purposes and ideals.

THE END.



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